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Daily Report

Near East & South Asia

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Daily Report
Near East & South Asia

FBIS-NES-95-041 *2 March 1995*

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Arab-Israeli Talks

'Great Importance' Attached to 'Syrian' CNN Briefing

TA0203122395 Tel Aviv HA'ARETZ in Hebrew 2 Mar 95 p A2

[Report by political correspondent Aluf Ben]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Walid al-Mu'allim, Syrian ambassador to the United States, is the man who briefed CNN's political correspondent prior to his report two days ago about progress in the peace negotiations between Israel and Syria.

Israeli sources yesterday attached great importance to the Syrians' decision to give a briefing to a U.S. television correspondent and reveal to him, for the first time, sensitive details about the negotiations with Israel and said that this attests to a Syrian willingness to compromise and make progress.

According to the Israeli sources, the Syrians sought to attain two objectives: demonstrate their commitment to the peace process and react to the statements by Israeli figures, such as Deputy Foreign Minister Yosi Beilin, who had expressed his doubts that Syrian President Hafiz al-Asad intends to reach peace with Israel. [passage omitted]

It was learned from Israeli sources that in his briefing al-Mu'allim included positions that the Syrians had accepted in the talks with Israel last year but have so far denied in public, such as opening embassies and foregoing symmetry with regard to the demilitarized zones. [passage omitted]

Reports received in Jerusalem indicate that al-Asad was terrified about the reaction in the Arab world to the possibility that the meeting of the Israeli and Syrian chiefs of staff indicated an imminent Israeli-Syrian agreement. That is why he initiated the summit in Alexandria—in which he made it clear to Husni Mubarak and King Fahd that an arrangement was still far off and that the gaps in the positions of the sides were still wide—in a bid to slow down the process of normalization with Israel.

Rabinovich on Syrian Media 'Plant,' Christopher Visit

TA0203083995 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 0505 GMT 2 Mar 95

[Interview with Itamar Rabinovich, ambassador to the United States, by Arye Golan in Washington, D.C. on 2 March—recorded]

[FBIS Translated Text] [Rabinovich] We are not close to an agreement. Over the past few months, that is between last summer and December 1994, some progress was made in the negotiations. At the same time, there are still many areas of disagreement. I would definitely not say that we were close to a successful conclusion of the negotiations.

[Golan] Are we also not close to an understanding on the two security zones, A and B, which were mentioned by the CNN correspondent?

[Rabinovich] Had these areas actually existed in real life we might have been close to an understanding about them. I must say that so far in the negotiations, no lines have been drawn, no maps have been demarcated, and no areas have been zoned off. We have certainly discussed the principles of a security arrangement. Demilitarization and the thinning out of forces are two of the principles related to security arrangements that we have discussed. However, there is still a difference between doing this and marking out specific areas or demarcating lines on a map. We have not yet crossed this divide.

[Golan] So what is the source of all these optimistic reports?

[Rabinovich] Anyone with a professional eye or ear for such things will immediately detect that the report broadcast on CNN has all the markings of a Syrian plant. It is interesting to note that this is the first time the Syrians have used a Western media source for this purpose. This is quite possibly connected to the secretary of state's upcoming visit to the region. There could be some kind of intention to build up expectations prior to the visit or to create a more optimistic atmosphere as part of Syria's negotiating tactics. This is an interesting development in that respect; however, I must state that neither the reports about an impending agreement nor the contention that areas were already drawn on a map are accurate.

[Golan] Ambassador Rabinovich, speaking in the more general and fundamental sense, are you convinced that Syrian President Hafiz al-Asad still intends to achieve peace with Israel in light of the tough positions he has been presenting over the past few months?

[Rabinovich] First of all, we have now just witnessed an attempt on their behalf to present a softer position. I would put it like this: Although an arbitrary pronouncement that Syria seeks peace with Israel is very important and positive in itself, simply uttering such words does not really mean much. In order to imbue this statement with real significance we must find an answer to three problems: First of all, we must find a way to achieve peace, not under Syria's conditions, but rather under a mutually acceptable formula. Second, the agreement must be reached within a relevant timeframe. Third, Syria must translate this peace into visible deeds. It is not enough to agree about something and sign a piece of paper. The Syrian leadership must take active steps and clearly convince the Israeli public that the agreement is not just a piece of paper but is a real shift from a state of conflict to a state of peace.

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[Golan] And in your opinion all this is still far away?

[Rabinovich] It still has to happen.

[Tel Aviv IDF Radio in Hebrew at 0600 GMT on 2 March carries a live telephone interview with Ambassador Rabinovich, who adds: "The media is not the vehicle for conducting effective negotiations. One of the reasons we have always sought to hold discreet negotiations is our belief that leaking details to the media is not the way to make progress in political negotiations. In this respect, what happened here is a pity."

[When asked whether he believes that Secretary of State Christopher's impending visit to the region will determine the outcome of the Syrian-Israeli negotiations for better or worse, Rabinovich says: "I believe it is an important visit. It is the secretary's first visit in a relatively long time, and the region wants to see U.S. leadership. The visit is important, but I would not view it as the be all and end all. Even if the visit fails to effect progress on the Syrian track, it will not mean the end of the story."

[Later in the interview, when asked whether the Israeli denials of the CNN report may be part of a secret negotiations process with Syria, Rabinovich replies: "There are no secret negotiations between Israel and Syria."]

'Arafat, Shahal Hold News Conference

JN0103173995 Jericho Voice of Palestine in Arabic 1400 GMT 1 Mar 95

[Report by 'Adil al-Za'nun in Gaza]

[FBIS Translated Text] His Excellency President Yasir 'Arafat met with Israeli Police Minister Moshe Shahal at the presidency in Gaza today. The Palestinian and Israeli sides discussed several important issues connected with the release of the Palestinian detainees, the crossing points and safe passages, and other issues of mutual interest.

At the end of the meeting, President 'Arafat and Minister Shahal held a news conference. The following are the proceedings of the news conference:

[Begin 'Arafat recording] We warmly welcome Mr. Shahal and the delegation accompanying him. We spent our time well, discussing many bilateral issues, particularly security-related issues, the crossing points and common transport routes, and many other issues such as the detainees and other matters of concern to both sides.

I thank him very much for this visit on the last day of Ramadan. Once again, I warmly welcome him. As I said to you at the meeting, I repeat that we are fully aware of Israel's security needs. God willing, we will try to overcome obstacles with enhanced joint cooperation. [end recording]

As for Israeli Police Minister Moshe Shahal, he spoke in Arabic:

[Begin Shahal recording, in Arabic] This was a good opportunity today at the end of the holy month of Ramadan to visit his excellency the president and those attending. In my name and on behalf of the Israeli Government, we offered warmest congratulations and best wishes, beseeching Almighty God that the president and the Palestinian people will celebrate this occasion next year while enjoying health, prosperity, and peace.

We spoke about several issues connected with security affairs and the future. The talks were excellent, and there was understanding with the police officers, the commander in chief of the police force, and the military commander of the southern sector [words indistinct].

In conclusion, I would like to reiterate congratulations and best wishes to you and his excellency the president, and wish you and the Palestinian people all the best, success, and many happy returns. Thank you. [end recording]

Regarding the purpose of the meeting and the results expected from it, Dr. Nabil Sha'th, minister of planning and international cooperation, spoke to the press.

[Begin recording] [Sha'th] This meeting took place at the request of Mr. Shahal to offer congratulations in his name and on behalf of the Israeli Government on 'Id al-Fitr and the end of Ramadan. It was an initiative showing good intentions to reopen the channels that were closed during the past period. We believe this was the basic objective of the visit. However,, we took the opportunity to discuss all controversial issues such as security, the closure, the detainees, and other problems such as crossing points. I believe the discussions were useful, and will pave the way for other meetings.

[Unidentified correspondent] [Words indistinct] any points?

[Sha'th] I do not believe that Mr. Shahal was authorized to conclude agreements. However, he will communicate what he heard to Prime Minister Rabin. We will soon meet in Rafah to review the issue of crossing points and the detainees.

[Correspondent] [Words indistinct] Palestinian side to Shahal [words indistinct].

[Sha'th] The issue of closure, the crossing points, and the detainees were the main topics. Of course, we discussed all the details concerning them. [end recording]

Islamic Affairs

Alleged NATO Plans Against Islamic Movements Detailed

NC0203094495 Cairo AL-SHA'B in Arabic 21 Feb 95 pp 1, 6

[Report by Mahmud Bakri]

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[FBIS Translated Excerpt] AL-SHA'B has learned that the plan recently adopted by NATO does not stop at confronting the Islamic movements in the region; it extends to the countries that worry NATO on the pretext that they represent instability in the region through their support for the Islamic movements.

It is within this framework that a European-Middle East conference will be held in the Spanish city of Barcelona in November. The countries invited by NATO to hold a dialogue with it to confront the Islamic movements, (Egypt, Israel, Tunisia, Morocco, and Mauritania), are expected to take part in that conference.

While the NATO member countries agree on the need to confront the Islamic movements, France and the United States differ over the areas in which the confrontation should be extended. France is content with working to create a secure area south of the Mediterranean Sea and to regard this as the main objective of the idea for holding the dialogue. But the United States is demanding action to create a secure area not just in the Mediterranean Sea, but also in the entire Middle East region.

AL-SHA'B has learned that contacts on the ambassadorial level began last week in Belgium with the NATO Secretariat. The ambassadors of the countries involved in the dialogue with NATO received a memorandum pointing out that the threat from "Islamic fundamentalism" equals the threat once posed by communism to NATO and that the reason for retaining the alliance is to confront two types of threat:

1. The political threats from Arab countries that have weapons of mass destruction and the other countries that are impeding—according to NATO—the achievement and completion of regional stability measures.

2. The security threats that are basically linked with fundamentalism. There was agreement during the meetings held in Geneva during the past two weeks that the dangers of fundamentalism do not stem only from its threats, but also from the spread of these dangers to influence the region as a whole. According to the recent NATO memorandum, this conflicts with the new shape of the Middle East. Information indicates that the attention of the NATO countries, while giving priority to the countries lying to the south of the Mediterranean Sea, will include all the countries of the region later. The second stage of the plan targets the Gulf countries. [passage omitted]

Brotherhood Official Denies 'Terrorism' Charges

NC0203113195 Cairo AL-SHA'B in Arabic 21 Feb 95 p 5

[Article by Muslim Brotherhood official Mustafa Mashhur: "What Now After These Anti-Islam Practices and Remarks?"]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Events in the world have been running quickly and successively in recent years and the law of the jungle, perhaps something even uglier, has been imposing itself on the world arena. Threats and practices against Islam have become rampant, exposing their ugly face after a period of deceit and camouflage.

The NATO secretary general has made very strange and arrogant statements. He said that "with the end of the Cold War between the communist states and the Western states, the danger threatening Europe now is fundamental Islam. The battles for which the NATO forces must be prepared will be against the Muslims." It is the story of the wolf and the lamb.

Regrettably, some Arab and Islamic regimes have taken the same line. They have launched a struggle and a war against the Islamic trend. They have harassed Islamists and curbed their activity, which calls for obeying God's orders and for reforming their homelands through an Islamic solution to which there is no alternative because it is God's bequest.

There are campaigns of arrests and campaigns of casting doubt and falsification on Islam and Muslims. In Egypt these campaigns are targeting Muslim Brotherhood members, who are being arrested and accused of terrorism and extremism. Although the Brotherhood has coexisted with the existing regime for over 10 years, it is only now that this tension in its relationship with the regime has appeared. We wonder: What is the reason for the current campaign? Is it because of the upcoming People's Assembly elections? Some Brotherhood members entered the People's Assembly in the 1984 and 1987 elections. They played their role perfectly well, causing no tension or disturbances.

Does it befit the People's Assembly speaker, who was recently elected president of the World Parliamentary Union, to pass Trade Unions Law No. 100 in the way it was passed and then repeat the same thing with the amendments introduced to this law?! Is he giving world parliaments an example to follow this method? Why did he neglect to consider the view of those [trade union officials] directly concerned with such laws? Why is he applying the precedent that the People's Assembly is the master of its own decisionmaking?

Some measures that contradict Islam's teachings have been adopted, such as permitting alcohol, gambling, and usury, and fighting the hijab [Islamic head scarf]. Television has been screening serials undermining Islam. We then find people opposing al-Azhar scholars when they object to these serials.

Since its inception 67 years ago the Brotherhood has been calling for God and for God's religion through wisdom and good advice. It has not approved the use of violence except against the Jews who colonized Palestine and the al-Aqsa Mosque and against British imperialism, which occupied our land. This is jihad and this has been done with the knowledge and approval of the various governments.

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The current accusations against the Brotherhood, that it is a terrorist group and is helping extremists, are false. Not one Brotherhood member has participated in any of the many incidents that have occurred in Egypt over 20 years. The Brotherhood has issued several statements denouncing violence and counter-violence. [passage omitted]

At the invitation of his eminence the general guide, the Brotherhood held a dinner to break the fast a few days ago. It was attended by a huge crowd representing every section of the people, including intellectuals; representatives from the Wafd, Labor, Liberal, and Nasirite parties; trade union representatives, such as Dr. Hamdi al-Sayyid and Dr. Hilmi Nimr; Christians, such as Dr. Milad Hanna and others; writers and journalists, such as Hasanayn Haykah and others; and some women. Several were given the opportunity to speak. They unanimously denounced this campaign against the Brotherhood, a campaign represented by the arrest of Brotherhood members, and the denial of the Brotherhood's existence in the arena. They praised the Brotherhood role in serving society and called for officially licensing its activity. They also denounced the People's Assembly positions on amending the professional associations law. They reviewed the enemy's stance on the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty, praised Egypt's stance on this issue, and warned against the Zionist enemy's aggressive plans. This meeting represented the real pulse of the Egyptian people. [passage omitted]

It is high time Egypt and the Arab countries reviewed their position, to stop these campaigns against the Brotherhood, and to correct the situation so that all of us will stand in one line against the enemy before it is too late. If the Arab and Islamic countries cooperate and remove their differences, they will be the greatest power in the world, a power to be reckoned with. Oh God, you are a witness to my statement.

Palestinian Affairs

'Arafat Addresses Palestinians on 'Id al-Fitr

JN0203081895 Jericho Voice of Palestine in Arabic 0600 GMT 2 Mar 95

[Speech by PLO Chairman Yasir 'Arafat on the occasion of 'Id al-Fitr on 1 March; place not given—recorded]

[FBIS Translated Text] In the name of God, the merciful, the compassionate. O sons of our steadfast militant people in the homeland and in countries of emigration; o sons of the victorious Palestinian revolution; o sons of the victorious blessed intifadah, who wrote, through your steadfastness and sacrifices, the most sublime verses of glory, pride, and dignity: I am addressing on this blessed honorable occasion, the advent of the blessed 'Id al- Fitr, to say to you all—women, men, youths, children, and aged people—many happy returns. We congratulate our beloved homeland, our people, and our Arab and Islamic nation on this 'Id and wish them love and peace.

This is the first 'Id we celebrate while laying down the first bricks on the path of achieving the dream, the big Palestinian dream, for which you offered sacrifices for many years to achieve liberation, dignity, and independence, as well as to continue the march of peace and hope, building our free, independent Palestinian state with holy Jerusalem as its capital, with holy Jerusalem as its capital, with holy Jerusalem as its capital.

O brothers, o beloved ones: On this blessed occasion, I would like to remember with you the convoys of righteous martyrs, who are more generous than us and who preceded us on the path of martyrdom, the path of redemption, led by the prince of martyrs [Khalil al-Wazir]. Those martyrs proved, through their blood, that the Palestinian cause is the difficult figure in the equation of the Middle East forces. On this occasion, I want to say to the chaste, righteous souls of those martyrs, that we will keep the pledge and oath until the flags of Palestine flutter over all Jerusalem minarets, walls, and churches, as well as over the symbols of our existence on this chaste, sacred land. And to enter your temple as they had entered it before. God never breaks his promise. [Koranic verse]

O brothers, o beloved ones: On this happy and blessed occasion, we will not forget our dear sisters and brothers, who are still under the yoke of Israeli jails and their suffering. We pledge to them all that we will continue to insist that there will be no freedom without their freedom and that there will be no dignity if their freedom and dignity are not achieved. We say to them: Be patient and remain steadfast. We will not forget you as long as we live. Be patient and God is our supporter.

O brothers, o beloved ones: Hold fast on your land, the land of dignity and pride, and demonstrate more and more solid unity. Truly God loves those who fight in his cause in battle array, as if they were a solid commented structure. [Koranic verse] Yes, let us demonstrate more unity and let us close our ranks in spite of the difficult circumstances you are passing through, the economic conditions imposed on us, and the practices which the occupation is still carrying out against the hands which are building our country's future. Let us unite our ranks as God supports the united people.

O sons, o brothers, o beloved ones, o kinsfolk: Glory, victory, and a shining future are your lot, God willing. And we wished to be gracious to those who were being depressed in the land, to make them leaders in faith and make them heirs, to establish a firm place for them in the land. [Koranic verse]

Many happy returns of the day to you and to the Arab and Islamic nation. God's peace, mercy, and blessings be upon you.

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Rabin Congratulates 'Arafat on 'Id al-Fitr

JN0203115595 Jericho Voice of Palestine in Arabic 1000 GMT 2 Mar 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhaq Rabin phoned His Excellency President Yasir 'Arafat this morning to congratulate him, as well as the Palestinian people, in his own name and on behalf of the Israeli Government and people, on the blessed 'Id al-Fitr.

'Arafat Receives Christopher Message on 'Id

JN0103152895 Jericho Voice of Palestine in Arabic 1400 GMT 1 Mar 95

[FBIS Translated Text] His Excellency President Yasir 'Arafat received U.S. Consul-General [in Jerusalem] Edward Abington at the presidency in Gaza at noon today. Discussions dealt with the U.S. secretary of state's upcoming visit to the region.

The U.S. consul-general delivered to President 'Arafat a congratulatory letter from U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher on the occasion of the 'Id al-Fitr. The letter expressed the hope that peace and prosperity will prevail in the National Authority areas.

'Clearer' U.S. Position Urged on Settlements, Jerusalem

TA0103173495 Jericho AL-AQSA in Arabic 27 Feb 95 pp 1, 7

[Editorial: "A Clearer U.S. Position Is Required"]

[FBIS Translated Text] Each time negotiations on implementing the second part of the Declaration of Principles get stalled, the United States tries to extricate the talks from the impasse at which they have arrived. In the face of persistent Israeli procrastination, the United States exerts formal pressure on Tel Aviv in a bid to moderate its stance on some issues that are not the essence of the talks but which constitute punitive measures by the Israeli Government. The latest of those measures was the clamping of a tough "security" siege on the West Bank and Gaza Strip over the last month.

But even if solutions to all secondary issues are reached, the issue of settlement activity will remain a basic problem requiring an immense effort. There cannot be peace as long as there is settlement activity. Since this issue is the one that will decide the future of the entire region, the thing that calls for reproach is the U.S. position, which publicly opposes settlement activity but rejects the discussion of this issue at the UN Security Council.

U.S. Secretary of State Christopher's visit to the region at the beginning of next month must not be subject to the Israeli stance if the United States truly wishes to advance the peace process. The more the United States succeeds in promoting the talks on the Palestinian-Israeli track, the more will it ensure the success of the entire peace process in the region. Therefore, the United States is required to adopt a clearer position on important and crucial issues, most significant of which are settlement activity and Jerusalem. This is because everything depends on resolving these two issues. Otherwise, there will be no point in any U.S. effort characterized by dual positions.

Authority, Donor Countries Agree on Aid Mechanism

JN0103171495 Jericho Voice of Palestine in Arabic 1400 GMT 1 Mar 95

[FBIS Translated Text] A Palestinian National Authority official has stated that during their meeting in Jericho, representatives from 20 states and the World Bank agreed on a mechanism to provide financial aid to the National Authority [NA] with the aim of establishing the infrastructure.

Following the meeting, UN Special Coordinator Terri Larsen urged donor countries to abide by their financial commitments, cover the investment programs, and remedy the financial deficit in the NA budget for this year.

Larsen said that Israel has a major influence on the Palestinian economy.

Official PA Booklet Rejects 1947 Partition Plan

TA0103151395 Jerusalem THE JERUSALEM POST in English 1 Mar 95 p 2

[Report by Liat Collins]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] The Palestinians do not recognize the Balfour Declaration or the 1947 partition plan and demand the right to return to land they considered conquered.

These are the main points of an official booklet produced by the Palestinian Authority's [PA] Information Ministry entitled: "Palestinian Refugees and the Right of Return."

MK [Knesset Member] Ze'ev Begin (Likud) distributed the English-language booklet to MKs yesterday, a week after he disclosed a similar PA booklet on Jewish immigration.

Begin called on Prime Minister Yitzhaq Rabin to shut down the ministry, which operates in Ramallah in contravention to the Oslo agreement restricting PA offices to Jericho or Gaza.

"The 1947 resolution on the partition of Palestine came only to complement the unjust laws and military orders enacted by the British Mandate government. The Palestinian people didn't accept the Balfour Declaration at any time," the booklet says.

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"As a result of the Balfour Declaration and the partition plan, the racist policy of the British Mandate government and the brutalities perpetrated by the Jews against the Palestinians, a total of over 750,000 Palestinian refugees were forced to abandon their homes and seek refuge in neighboring Arab countries. This large number of people didn't leave their country voluntarily, but were forced to flee following the Zionist massacres committed against unarmed Palestinians."

The booklet describes four "waves" of forced emigration and displacement and emphasizes the Dayr Yasin massacre.

"The booklet proves that the PLO has not changed its plan of stages, whose eventual aim is to wipe Israel from the map, and it proves that (Prime Minister Yitzhaq) Rabin's separation plan won't bring about peace but an increase in terror," Begin said.

Qaddumi Explains PLO Cairo Meeting Boycott

JN0103191895 London AL-WASAT in Arabic 27 Feb 95 pp 18-20

[Interview with Faruq Qaddumi, head of the PLO Political Department, by Zaki Shihab in Tunis; date not given]

[FBIS Translated Text] [Shihab] Why did you refuse to take part in the recent PLO Executive Committee meeting in Cairo?

[Qaddumi] First of all, the parties to the meeting should have abandoned old methods and prepared for that meeting. Such meetings should not be used as reactions to or a cover for other meetings that cannot achieve their true goals. They also should be studied thoroughly, and Palestinian-Arab contacts should be held in order to unify the Palestinian position and to attract Arab interest, which we lost after the signing of the Oslo agreement.

The situation should be fully explained to the international community in order that Israel be held responsible for its actions, which conflict with the peace march, complicate the solution, and create new troubles in the region. The sponsors of the peace conference should also have been urged to strengthen their role, especially since the United States has reduced its efforts and does not currently intend to play a positive and effective role Moreover, the United States has bowed to Israeli pressures. This leads to more tension in the region due to Israel's attempts to impose situations that upset the balance of interests in the region. This raises the concern of the entire international group.

[Shihab] Was your boycott of the Cairo meeting a prelude to dissent or a split within the Fatah Movement?

[Qaddumi] The main reason for the boycott was that the Fatah Central Committee did not meet as it should have, and the Fatah leadership, which has assumed responsibility for the settlement, was unable to work out specific trends and to shoulder its responsibilities in the best way possible. The Fatah leadership gained a clear view of how to deal with these issues after we held extensive contacts with the Palestinian forces and factions and discussed with them the need to launch a joint action to preserve a sound peace course, ensure adherence to political principles, and finally secure coordination and cooperation between concerned Arab parties in order to strengthen our negotiating cards.

[Shihab] What was Abu-'Ammar's [Yasir 'Arafat] reaction?

[Qaddumi] He agreed, but insisted on the emergency meeting.

[Shihab] What did he want from that meeting?

[Qaddumi] I do not believe an urgent meeting was necessary. The media hinted that the Palestinians would do something to confront that problem. But regrettably, there was insufficient preparation for that meeting.

[Shihab] To be more precise, is there an imminent split within the Fatah Movement because of the position toward the settlement with Israel?

[Qaddumi] There are disagreements over the political trend to deal with the growing crisis. It is time for us to take decisive measures to secure the unity of Palestinian action and the participation of all the national factions away from single-handedness and erroneous daily national action.

[Shihab] Fatah has recently made statements in Tunis in a different language from that of the self-rule authority. How do you view that?

[Qaddumi] We believe that the Palestinian Authority [PA] is not doing its job well. Most officials there are not doing their jobs properly and are looking after their personal interests rather than the public welfare. The negotiations are going in a vicious circle and the negotiators have insufficient political acumen to explore Israel's wicked intentions and attempts to gain time, blackmail the Palestinian negotiator, impose new facts, and pressure the National Authority into accepting as facts the confiscation of territories and the establishment of settlements without international deterrence or strong rejection by the Authority.

[Shihab] Have you raised the subject of negotiators and their capabilities with President Yasir 'Arafat? If so, what was his answer?

[Qaddumi] The style of negotiations and what should and should not have been done have been discussed by Palestinian circles. The collective demand was almost entirely in favor of halting these negotiations, which are not beneficial and which obstruct the desire for a change in the peace process.

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[Shihab] What are 'Arafat's present options?

[Qaddumi] The negotiations should be stopped and the freedom of movement should be given to the masses. The text of the agreement says that responsibility for the security of all Israeli individuals wherever they might be is an Israeli responsibility. This means that we and the PA should not shoulder this responsibility as long as Israel insists on shouldering it. The withdrawal of the Israeli forces from the Palestinian territories would create the suitable conditions for comprehensive security and expedite progress on other Arab tracks. Furthermore, Arab contacts, coordination, and cooperation should be enhanced after the Palestinian negotiations, regrettably, departed from the other Arab tracks. Some of us thought that we could alone grab our rights without Arab and international support.

[Shihab] Is Abu-'Ammar prepared to stop the negotiations?

[Qaddumi] So far, he appears to have several things in his mind, and he has not reached a decision on them. He should listen to the Palestinian voices to be convinced to stop these negotiations. Thus far, he has not been convinced to stop the negotiations.

[Shihab] It was noted recently that Hani al-Hasan [Fatah Central Committee member] intends to form a political party. What is the future of Fatah when you and Abu-Mazin [PLO Executive Committee and Fatah Central Committee member Mahmud 'Abbas] insist on boycotting the Executive Committee meetings?

[Qaddumi] The Fatah Central Committee is strongly integrated despite efforts by some of its members to launch a new initiative among the Palestinian masses that will stop this confusion that is prevailing in the Palestinian arena. This confusion is causing Arab concern that the peace process is near to failure, in addition to the concern of the international community. This was clearly felt during the visit to the region by the European troika delegation, led by French Foreign Minister Alain Juppe, who expressed concern because of the signs threatening the peace process in the region. The Palestinians should prepare to adopt a decisive decision that proves to the international community the seriousness of the Palestinian leadership in dealing with the developments caused by the intransigent Israeli position.

[Shihab] When you call for a decisive decision, in what direction should this decision be?

[Qaddumi] The Oslo agreement should be abrogated after its failure due to the Israeli behavior. The Israeli behavior requires international, Arab, and patriotic efforts. Otherwise, the confiscation of Arab land will continue.

[Shihab] Is this a call for returning to the intifadah?

[Qaddumi] The intifadah should continue. This is the path that ensures rights. Arab coordination should resume, the role of the sponsors of the peace process should be reactivated, and they should be strongly urged to intervene to curb Israeli transgressions.

[Shihab] Does this position have the support of Fatah circles in the occupied territories?

[Qaddumi] The great majority of Fatah is asking us, as the Palestinian leadership, to take these steps as soon as possible. The patriotic forces and resistance factions have also been pushing for the same thing for a long time.

[Shihab] Changes have occurred in the structure of Fatah. Will this affect your influence?

[Qaddumi] I believe that all these changes are not basic. On the contrary, the Palestinian Fatah cadres are determined to make basic changes in the situation of the occupied territories.

[Shihab] Do you personally or as a member of the Central Committee receive contacts from Fatah members within this framework?

[Qaddumi] We hold direct contacts everyday with Fatah forces in the occupied territories

[Shihab] What is the extent of your coordination with the other factions?

[Qaddumi] During our direct and indirect contacts with all the national forces and our brothers in Hamas [the Islamic Resistance Movement], we sensed that there should be a general, concerted effort to preserve the Palestinian national objectives, adhere to principles despite the difference in methods, and to take into account the nature of the present stage and how to deal with it.

[Shihab] Is there any common ground between the Central Committee and Fatah Movement on the one hand and the other factions and Hamas on the other?

[Qaddumi] The ongoing resistance against the occupation, the unity of action, and the need to establish an independent Palestinian state and end the occupation. Moreover, the PLO is the sole legitimate representative of the Palestinian people.

[Shihab] Will such a position lead to confrontation between you and 'Arafat, who insists on adhering to the Oslo agreement?

[Qaddumi] Although Abu-'Ammar insists on the agreement, the fact is that the performance in not good. This has deprived the authority of popular support. We should first start with ourselves. On the international level, we should define political objectives based on the land-for-peace principle and Israel's withdrawal from the Arab territories, including Jerusalem, and find a solution to the refugee problem. These are the U.S. conditions on which the initiative of former President George Bush was based and which we cannot ignore.

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[Shihab] Will Abu-'Ammar's insistence on his position lead to a divorce?

[Qaddumi] When matters are understood clearly, he will seek a solution acceptable to everybody.

[Shihab] What is the nature of contacts you are holding with Hamas?

[Qaddumi] The contacts are based on the idea that Hamas should not be harmed as it is a national faction. Coordination is under way over basic national issues in order to create the spirit of struggle in the popular circles. We have no authority. We only have responsibility for maintaining security. This is not authority. To be more precise, when we have sovereignty over the land, we can say we have authority. Therefore, all our publications aimed at enlightening the youths prove that we have no authority. The aim is resisting the occupation.

[Shihab] Is the Arab frame of mind receptive to the trend you advocate?

[Qaddumi] Many Arab quarters welcome this trend. It is welcomed in countries such as Egypt, Syria, Lebanon, Arab Maghreb countries, and the Gulf region. This is confirmed by the meetings that are held whether in Cairo or elsewhere and which rejected the termination of the boycott before the peace settlement achieves tangible results on the ground.

[Shihab] Are the leaders of the Palestinian factions which oppose the Oslo agreement ready to participate in a [PLO] Central Council or PLO Executive Committee meeting, and what are their conditions?

[Qaddumi] The issue is not one of conditions. They feel that there is a crisis, and that Fatah is the one which assumed the responsibility for the settlement, and that it must, first, pave the way and remove many impurities that have stuck to public work as a result of the Oslo agreement and the way it was implemented, which is not commensurate with what is required on the Palestinian level.

[Shihab] The recent [Fatah] Central Committee Tunis meeting was held to study organizational and administrative affairs and it was agreed to hold further meetings in Cairo or al-'Arish.

[Qaddumi] First, it should be made clear that we refuse to hold Central Committee meetings either in Cairo or al-'Arish because the headquarters of the PLO and Fatah is in fraternal Tunisia. It is impermissible that we move to another place, particularly that the files to which we will refer are in Tunis. We also live here. The costs here are less. The place is known to all, particularly to the European countries.

[Shihab] What about your economic difficulties, particularly the difficulties encountered by your offices abroad?

[Qaddumi] The financial crisis has not been solved although we contacted fraternal and friendly countries and explained to them the PLO's financial and political state of affairs. Some friends, but not the brothers, have adopted positive stands. We are managing our affairs in the political department within the limits of the assistance we received. We hope to receive positive replies from some Palestinian key sectors and the brothers.

[Shihab] Which Palestinian forces have you sought assistance from?

[Qaddumi] Those who can support the PLO and the political department, in particular, because under the Oslo agreement, the National Authority has no right to establish foreign relations.

[Shihab] One of the questions that was raised over the past few days deals with the issue of leadership in the Palestinian arena, particularly after it was revealed that there was an assassination attempt against President Yasir 'Arafat?

[Qaddumi] I do not believe this talk is accurate. There was no assassination attempt. I do not believe that there could be such a trend in the Palestinian arena.

[Shihab] Even by the Abu-Nidal [Sabri al-Banna] group?

[Qaddumi] I believe that there are no Abu-Nidal groups now.

[Shihab] Why do officials from the self-rule authority speak about bringing to trial persons in connection with this issue?

[Qaddumi] In my opinion, this is deception.

PLO Official's Return Expected To Spark Violent Reaction

TA0203093295 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 0505 GMT 2 Mar 95

[Report on telephone interview with General 'Atallah 'Atallah, in Cairo, by Yoni Ben-Menahem, in the studio; date not given]

[FBIS Translated Text] General 'Atallah 'Atallah, alias Abu-al-Za'im, is returning to the PLO and the territories. After establishing a splinter group in 1986 and resigning from the PLO, he is now returning to the fold. 'Arafat and Jordanian King Husayn have agreed that 'Abu-al-Za'im will arrive in Gaza within two weeks. 'Arafat, who has forgiven Abu-al-Za'im for leaving the PLO, plans to appoint him to the senior position of coordinator for all the Palestinian security services in the West Bank. Abu-al-Za'im served as the director of PLO military intelligence in Lebanon for ten years. He has the reputation of being a first-rate intelligence official who commanded the respect of all the terrorist organizations in Lebanon. 'Arafat wants to bolster security, Abu-al-Za'im has accepted the job, and Israel has also acceded to 'Arafat's request to permit Abu-al-Za'im's

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return. Jibril al-Rujub, who has lately been losing ground with 'Arafat and with the residents of the West Bank, is now in a tight spot. Abu-al-Za'im, his designated supervisor, does not conceal his opinion of al-Rujub in a telephone conversation from Cairo.

Abu-al-Za'im expressed the belief that the Palestinians in the West Bank already know what kind of people al-Rujub and his men are. He is an uncouth ignoramus. He has a personal interest in maintaining the confusion so he can continue to operate together with the thugs in his organization. Everyone in the territories knows that al-Rujub's men engage in criminal activities and perpetrate violence against local residents.

Al-Rujub, for his part, has not remained silent in the face of this criticism. He retaliated by making his own acerbic comments about Abu-al-Za'im this week, describing him as a relic from the dung heap of history.

Abu-al-Za'im claims that he was officially informed that 'Arafat had scolded al-Rujub over the telephone and summoned him to the Gaza Strip. The PLO chairman gave al-Rujub a dressing down over the phone and ordered him to clean up his act. A senior police officer who was in 'Arafat's office, said that the PLO chairman warned al-Rujub to either revert back to his natural dimensions or become a clerk at the Palestinian Information Ministry, where he could give as many media interviews as he wanted.

The prevailing assessment in the territories is that the struggle between Abu-al-Za'im and al-Rujub will rapidly deteriorate into violence.

PFLP Said 'Major Party' in New Opposition Group

TA0103165895 Jerusalem AL-QUDS in Arabic 1 Mar 95 p 6

[FBIS Translated Text] Amman, QUDS PRESS—The Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine [PFLP], one of the opposition Palestinian factions, has affirmed its participation in a grouping of Palestinian opposition forces headed by former Nabulus Mayor Bassam al-Shak'ah. The establishment of the grouping was announced in Nabulus.

'Abd-al-Rahim Malluh, member of the PFLP Political Bureau, has said that the PFLP is a major party in this grouping. He added that the grouping, which includes more than one political party, is still limited to Nabulus. He said that "the PFLP and the other forces will try to expand the grouping so that it will extend to the rest of the occupied Palestinian territories on the basis of the program of return, self-determination, an independent state, and maintenance of the PLO as the sole legitimate representative of the Palestinian people."

Malluh, who has resigned from membership of the PLO Executive Committee, revealed that the framework of the 10 factions opposed to the peace process "no longer exists because of the political and ideological differences prevailing in it." He said, however, that "the new framework is not a substitute to the ten."

On a different note, Malluh said that "the PFLP does not oppose the return of any of its cadres to the autonomous areas even through the PLO's agreement with Israel." He stressed that "the PFLP supports the Palestinians' right of return."

On reports about the expulsion of PFLP members, including Abu-Nidal al-Muslimi, a leading Front figure, Malluh said: "There is no basis to reports about the expulsion of Abu-Nidal al-Muslimi from the PFLP." He stressed that al-Muslimi and three others "returned to Gaza according to a decision by the PFLP and they are still members in it."

Hamas Shaykh Jamil Hamami Released on Bail

TA0103174395 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 1500 GMT 1 Mar 95

[FBIS Translated Text] The Ramallah military court has released on bail Shaykh Jamil Hamami, one of the leaders of Hamas [Islamic Resistance Movement] in Judaea and Samaria who was arrested a few days ago. Our correspondents Yoni Ben-Menahem and Dani Zaqen report that Hamami was released on his own recognizance, after posting 7,500 shekels in bail. He will remain under house arrest until his trial, which will begin next week.

In the charge sheet submitted to the Ramallah court, Hamami was charged with inciting against the State of Israel during a speech at Abu-Diz University.

Hamas, PA Coexistence Discussed

95AA0077A London FILASTIN AL-MUSLIMAH in Arabic Jan 95 pp 10-12

[Article by Majid Ibrahim: "The PA and Hamas: Will Confrontation Win Out Over Coexistence?"]

[FBIS Translated Text] In the flood of failures and pressures the Palestinian Authority [PA] is enduring, the massacre at the Palestine Mosque in Gaza came along and increased the isolation of the Authority, and put major question marks over the future of relations between the PA and the opposition. Indeed, between the PA and the Palestinian people, given the PA's submission to the will of the Zionist occupiers, and the PA's commitment to the Oslo accord, with no prospect of disengaging from it or even amending or developing it in order to move closer to the hopes, aspirations, and goals of the Palestinian people, or at least to not close the door to these aspirations and the program of the Palestinian forces, which aspire higher than the ceiling of the PA's program.

The Palestinian Authority Has Submitted to Zionist Demands

Since the signing of the Cairo agreement on 4 May 1994, which brought the PA to Gaza and Jericho, it was clear

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that the Authority had consolidated its power over the autonomous areas and kept the opposition—especially its backbone, Hamas [Islamic Resistance Movement]—at a distance. 'Arafat thought he would be able to succeed in this mission by following the course of international aid promised him after the signing of the Oslo accord. International aid would lead to the improvement of economic conditions in the autonomous areas. In addition there would be some other achievements, such as the freeing of detainees and the return of the deportees. This would bring about a popular rallying around the PA, leading to a weakening in the position of the opponents of the Oslo accord. It would perhaps even push them to accept the status quo and plunge into the agreement and join with the autonomous authority, either through elections or appointment. The fact is that 'Arafat understood the importance of the time factor in achieving his goals, and so did not seek to clash with Hamas at the same time the accord had not come to fruition, or maturity, or harvest. Here we refer to several of 'Arafat's attempts to channel money to Hamas to persuade it to participate in the autonomy—chiefly his success in persuading a few fighters close to the 'Izz-al-Din al-Qassam Brigades to join the Palestinian morals police, and appointing Shaykh Hamid al-Baytawi, close to the Hamas movement, deputy magistrate in the West Bank. This was in place of 'Arafat's direct offer to Hamas to join the PA when it was first established, with an equal number of Fatah officials to take part in it.

'Arafat also vigorously sought to meet with Hamas leaders inside the territories and to open a dialogue with them. His visit to the Islamic University was seen as a step in this direction; this also yielded serious preparations for a meeting between 'Arafat and some Hamas officials in the Gaza Strip. This was just a few days before the massacre, and the way for it had been prepared with meetings held between Hamas and Fatah in the Gaza Strip, in order to define the subjects for the dialogue and the meetings. The martyrdom of journalist Hani 'Abid at the hands of Palestinian agents at Zionist prompting in the Gaza Strip, and the insult 'Arafat received when he attempted to take part in the martyr's funeral, was an opportunity to activate the Hamas-'Arafat dialogue after Hamas mediated to solve the problem that had arisen between 'Arafat and the Jihad movement following the incident at the funeral of martyr Hani 'Abid.

In view of the nature of the Oslo accord, which turned the PA into an instrument of police repression against the Palestinian people, and given Rabin's faltering confidence in 'Arafat, pressure has begun to mount on 'Arafat to put a halt to Hamas's military activity, which the Zionists claim Hamas in Gaza sponsors and harbors. 'Arafat tried to resist the pressure and attempted to create disruptions in the dialogue with Hamas, to convince the Zionists that he will thus be able to convince Hamas that there is no way out of offering concessions to the PA, to avoid a bone-breaking battle with it. But 'Arafat failed in this for two reasons:

First: the aid-giving countries' delay in releasing funds, on the pretext of the absence of an effective Palestinian regime to administer and invest these funds, in addition to the Zionists' procrastination in implementing provisions of the Oslo accord such as freeing the detainees and bringing the deportees home. This has created an air of popular resentment against the PA and the Oslo accord.

Second: Hamas's refusal to take part in the PA or offer concessions to 'Arafat in reducing its military activity against the Zionists. On the contrary, it has continued, developed, and escalated this activity, which makes the Zionists doubt 'Arafat's ability to contain Hamas and comply with the requirements of the Oslo and Cairo agreements, except by the use of force against opposition forces.

Hence the Gaza massacre was the result of mounting Zionist pressure on 'Arafat and the latter's wish to impose himself as the dominant authority on the ground, to satisfy the Zionists, preparatory to the expansion of the autonomous region to include the occupied West Bank.

Going Beyond the Massacre and its Repercussions

It appears that the police command's overzealousness in carrying out 'Arafat's orders, such as preventing the demonstration of Friday, 18 November, led to an unexpected result: the large number of killed and wounded as the result of the Palestinian Police having opened fire on them. This led to violent mass rage throughout the Gaza Strip, which might have continued more vehemently, and shaken the fragile foundations on which the PA rests. Thus one can understand the reason 'Arafat had recourse to a course of appeasement, through which he hopes to prevent an explosion so big that he would no longer be able to control the Gaza Strip, or even absorb the masses' anger at him and his authority. But the steps 'Arafat has taken to pacify the situation are only superficial, and have not yet made a difference. Even in the future they are not expected to condemn the perpetrators of the massacre.

Despite the formation of a joint PA-Hamas committee to work on solving the problems resulting from the massacre and to establish responsibility for it, the committe has barely moved because of the insistence of the PA's participants that they represent Fatah, not the PA. This means that, with this step, 'Arafat was able to disavow responsibility for the massacre and get beyond the condition Hamas set for agreement between the two sides, which was to hold 'Arafat and the PA responsible for the massacre. This turned the problem between Hamas and the PA—indeed, between the PA and the Palestinian people—into a problem between Hamas and Fatah. From the very beginning 'Arafat wanted to reach this point as soon as he succeeded in using his Fatah organization and activating it against Hamas, by organizing demonstrations in Gaza and Jericho, in which members of Fatah and members of the Palestinian Police took part, shouting anti-Hamas slogans.

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There were three goals 'Arafat wanted to realize with this demonstration:

First: to refurbish his personal standing, which has begun to erode and collapse, especially after the anti-'Arafat slogans that were chanted, and which expressed the popular resentment toward him and his authority.

Second: Terrorizing and intimidating Hamas using Fatah, sending Hamas a message that it would find itself confronting Fatah, not the PA, if it kept to its present path of rejecting the PA and weakening its standing.

Third: confirming to the outside world, especially the Zionists and the American administration, that 'Arafat is still firmly in control in the Gaza Strip and that he enjoys popularity among his people despite everything that has happened. 'Arafat has also tried to avoid responsibility by claiming that it was the demonstrators who opened fire on the police. He claimed there were infiltrators in the demonstration who did that to drive a wedge between the PA and Hamas. He also accused Iran of being involved in what happened—saying Iran had incited Hamas and the Jihad to bring about the Gaza massacre!

Even so, 'Arafat could muster no more than 9,000 demonstrators in the Gaza Strip and Jericho, versus the 20,000-70,000 demonstrators Hamas produced in a single rally just in the Gaza Strip. Although Hamas, which organized the mass rally on 26 November 1994, did not mean thereby to respond to the PA, and the rally was organized before the massacre occurred, it was a genuine referendum on Hamas's popularity, and a clear message to 'Arafat's authority: that it was confronting not Hamas but a large segment of the Palestinian people.

Is It Possible to Assign Responsibility for the Massacre?

Turning to Hamas. It would have been possible for it to escalate the situation into a crisis with 'Arafat's authority and to exploit the grave error the police committed, in order to isolate and weaken the PA. But in its view continued escalation, given the tense and charged atmosphere, might have led to the outbreak of a civil war. 'Arafat's authority would have exploited this to strike at Hamas and its power in the Gaza Strip. So 'Arafat wanted to involve his organization in the battle and send a message to Hamas, that its persistent confrontation with his authority, and escalation of it, would leave it standing face to face with Fatah, not the PA. The latter would intervene later to strike Hamas on the pretext of stopping the civil war. So the movement's leaders in the Gaza Strip decided to pacify the situation, while continuing to blame 'Arafat and his authority directly for carrying out the massacre in compliance with the Zionists' wishes. There is no doubt about it: the pacification served 'Arafat, too, because continued demonstrations and protests would have weakened his position locally and internationally. Thus the interests of both sides overlapped—Hamas's and the PA's—in pacifying the situation, but the pacification measures and the formation of the joint committee to solve disputes were not considered sufficient to spare the Palestinian people the calamities of civil war. It is clear that Hamas is insisting that the PA bear the responsibility for what happened and that 'Arafat in his turn is rejecting it. He is even trying to accuse Hamas, and lay the blame on it. Thus chances that the two sides' joint committee will achieve positive results are doubtful. Even if this committee were able to form new legislative and popular investigative committees with the consent of both sides, 'Arafat is unwilling to accept any outcome that would condemn his authority. There is even doubt over whether he would allow the formation of neutral investigative committees, because he knows in advance that they will find the truth, which is that the PA bears the responsibility for what happened, with the testimony of the eyewitnesses who were present at the massacre. While this massacre may have been allowed to pass in peace, it might be difficult to limit the popular Palestinian reaction to any future massacre, or indeed the reaction of Hamas's base of support. After the Palestine Mosque massacre, Hamas succeeded in containing it to a large degree. The fact that this is no longer the way to deal with both sides in the growing crisis over the massacre causes accusing fingers to be pointed at 'Arafat's authority, which does not hesitate to sow the seeds of civil war, on the pretext that it is the only authority on the ground, and everyone must cooperate with it. Instead of acting to limit dangers, 'Arafat has brandished his organization at Hamas in provocative marches in Gaza and Jericho, in which members of his police and some members of Fatah have shouted anti-Hamas slogans and provocatively fired volleys of shots. After the partial agreement signed between Hamas and the PA, in which both sides agreed to avoid armed displays, some men with muffled faces went out and opened fire on the houses of several Hamas leaders. Hamas, for its part, abided by the partial agreement in its rally on 26 November 1994, on the anniversary of the commander of the Izz-al-Din al-Qassam Cells [as published], 'Imad 'Aql; no armed person from Hamas took part in the rally, nor did any of its participants make any provocative statements about the PA. The speakers confined themselves to holding the PA responsible for the massacre; the movement hastened to deny the phony communique supposedly issued by the Izz-al-Din al-Qassam Brigades, which threatened some members of the PA. On another front, the Hamas leadership channeled the masses' resentment into anti-occupation activities and urged demonstrators to strike at the Zionist barriers around the settlements in the Gaza Strip. A Zionist soldier was killed at the junction of the Netzarim settlement in the Gaza Strip. In this connection, Zionist writer Gideon Samit said, in an article in HAARETZ on 28 November 1994, commenting on Hamas's rally, in which 20,000-70,000 demonstrators took part (according to various estimates): "It is important to ask ourselves how it was possible that such anger, among an easily incited population, how it was possible to keep them calm for several days? Had the

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Islamic leadership wanted the demonstrators to go out and take control of Gaza, and knocked down all its doors, they would have. This did not happen for one reason: the ability of Hamas and the Islamic Jihad to manage positive negotiations, and their ability to control their members." He added that "this conclusion cannot be very much of a surprise, for Hamas is a political organization aimed at gaining the greatest influence over the Palestinian public, in addition to doing everything harmful to us," and "it is within the power of Hamas and the Islamic Jihad to seize the power they want with blood and fire, but their leaders have decided otherwise. The number of Sufyan Abu-Zayidah (one of Fatah's commands in the Gaza Strip) were examples of self-control, and said that they implemented all the provisions of the accord; the number of demonstrators was estimated to represent 30 percent of the Palestinians in Gaza."

The Future of PA-Hamas Relations

It may be said that the Gaza massacre opened a new era in relations between the PA and the opposition, in general, and Hamas specifically. After long hesitation, 'Arafat opted to intervene in the confrontation with Hamas, while keeping to his well-known method of trying to coopt it in the autonomy agreement, or at least to prevent its carrying out attacks on the Zionist occupation from bases in the Gaza Strip. As is well known, Hamas still adheres to resistance against the occupation, wherever it exists, while expressing appropriate flexibility in dialogue with the PA, to make daily life easier for the Palestinian people. However, we believe that 'Arafat does not prefer the force option. He is pushed in that direction because of his entanglement in the Oslo accords and the absence of any clear strategy on his part for improving or amending the agreement, or rejecting obedience to Zionist pressures, and by virtue of the Zionists' penetration of the PA and the Palestinian Police. Hamas, for its part, it is not about to give up its resistance against the occupation, even given its effort to avoid clashing with the PA. It is our belief that the incompatibility between the PA's program and Hamas's is very great and cannot be bridged, even were Hamas to participate as a political party in legislative elections, not set by the deadline in the Oslo accord. Thus the possibility for renewed confrontations between the two sides does exist, especially given the Zionist insistence that the PA consolidate its hegemony over the autonomous areas and the link between 'Arafat's success in his security mission, the expansion of the autonomous areas, and the holding of elections.

It is true that 'Arafat's present position makes it impossible for him to enter into an all-out confrontation with Hamas, given Hamas's broad popularity in the Gaza Strip and the fact that it would not be in his best interest anyway. However, the language of rationality and logic does not always prevail, especially as the PA has no independent decisionmaking power. That is on one hand. On the other, what is available to 'Arafat is not an option for all-out confrontation with the opposition, but a secondary battle of attrition to push it into a dialogue and mutual understanding with the PA, instead of a confrontation not in its best interest (the way 'Arafat sees it), because in this case it would get into a losing battle with a stronger side in charge. In addition, 'Arafat is convinced that Hamas specifically is avoiding a clash with the PA in order to maintain the unity of the Palestinian scene, and that Hamas believes the major beneficiary of the clash would be the Zionists. It appears that this conviction of 'Arafat's was strengthened by his experience with Hamas after the massacre, in that it was Hamas that took the initiative to calm things down completely after the massacre, instead of resorting to escalation with the aggressive PA, to avert civil war.

In our view, if these are 'Arafat's calculations, then they are without doubt imprecise, for Hamas has become a widely influential popular movement, and 'Arafat's only way out is to offer it concessions to get what he wants. The main concession is to coexist with the program of resistance Hamas has adopted, and which we do not think it will abandon under any circumstances. 'Arafat may obtain a pledge from Hamas, albeit a temporary one, that it will not carry out military operations in the Gaza Strip; but this pledge is conditional on demands on the PA, relating to its respect of freedoms and the organization of municipal elections, in addition to noninterference with its fighters who launch attacks against the Zionists.

On another front, no matter how much self-control Hamas exercises, this cannot last forever, plus the fact that it cannot control all its supporters and members to prevent unexpected reactions to the PA's repression.

Thus the specter of civil war will remain, thanks to the curse of the Oslo accord, which came behind the backs of the whole Palestinian people. And it serves to mobiliize one segment of the Palestinian people to fight another segment; indeed, to fight the whole Palestinian people.

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Algeria

Dembri: Elections To Go Ahead as Planned

AU0103184895 Paris AFP in English 1825 GMT 1 Mar 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Brussels, March 1 (AFP)—Algeria's Islamic opposition groups lack the will to take part in political talks to end the country's bloody civil war, according to Foreign Minister Mohamed Salah Dembri speaking on a visit here Wednesday [1 March].

However presidential elections will go ahead as planned "before the end of the year" and will be followed by legislative and municipal elections, he said.

Dembri said he did not rule out the possibility that Algeria's Islamic fundamentalists might take part in the vote.

But the Islamic Salvation Front (FIS), the leading fundamentalist group, has been "dissolved legally and has used up all its means of appeal," he insisted.

He added that candidates who respect pluralism and foreswear the use of violence have a right to contest the elections.

Algeria's violence was triggered after the army called off the second round of free general elections in January 1992 once it was clear the FIS was poised to sweep to victory.

Dembri arrived here Tuesday for talks with Belgian officials and with the European Commissioner for relations with Mediterranean countries, Manuel Marin. During a press conference Dembri evaded questions on the whereabouts of 'Abassi Madani and 'Ali Belhadj, the two FIS leaders currently under house arrest in Algeria.

"One has been hospitalised at his own request and the other has been transferred to another place of residence," he said, giving no further details.

The minister said his government was still open to dialogue with the Islamic opposition, which has been waging a bloody campaign against the state in which the two sides between them have lost an estimated 30,000 lives.

Dembri said the fundamentalist groups were continuing to make demands but showing no inclination to join in a dialogue, an apparent reference to talks held in Rome in January.

Some of the conditions posed by the opposition in the talks, which the government did not attend, were "an insult to the dignity of the Algerian people," he said.

Dembri also raised his government's concerns about the supply of arms to the extremists. He said a European network was continuing to supply weapons, citing Islamic groups in Germany, Switzerland, Italy and France where an arms cache was discovered Tuesday in the Paris region.

Says Elections 'Open to All'

NC0103201995 London MBC Television in Arabic 1800 GMT 1 Mar 95

[FBIS Translated Text] During an exclusive interview with MBC Television in Brussels, Algerian Foreign Minister Mohamed Salah Dembri has affirmed that nominations for the Algerian presidential election that Liaimine Zeroual's Government insists on holding before the end of 1995 are open to all citizens, even those who belong to the Islamic Salvation Front [FIS].

Our correspondent Nur-al-Din al-Faridi reports from Brussels:

[Begin recording] [al-Faridi] While Algeria slides daily deeper into the maelstrom of violence and counterviolence, the authorities insist on the need to hold a presidential election before the end of this year under the supervision of international inspectors. They also promise to continue the dialogue. However, several opposition political parties are demanding that priority be given to the restoration of the legislative elections.

Why do the Algerian authorities give priority to a presidential election at the expense of the legislative elections? Some opposition parties are demanding legislative elections.

[Dembri] The restoration of the process of democratic elections stems from ideas raised during the national dialogue that was held in January 1994. It was part of the public reforms program that the Algerian Government is carrying out. These include political reforms and will proceed according to a timetable that will gradually restore the elections. The presidential election has priority. This is not a new project. It was first presented as part of the national accord proposals.

[Al-Faridi] Regarding nominations for the presidential elections, can FIS personalities run for the presidency?

[Dembri] The presidential election is open to every Algerian national who meets the legal requirements. This is a general principle. Therefore, every citizen has the right to run.

[Al-Faridi] A candidate must fulfill the following conditions: He must abide by the Constitution, accept the principle of pluralism, and be opposed to violence. However, the government's stubbornness on the one hand and the doubts cast by the three fronts, the Socialist Forces Front, the FIS, and the National Liberation Front on the usefulness of a presidential election on the other suggests that Algeria's dark tunnel is still long. [end recording]

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Aide Says Only Prosecutor Knows Belhadj Location

MM0103160095 London AL-HAYAH in Arabic 1 Mar 95 pp 1, 4

[Report by Kamil al-Tawil: "Algeria: Only Public Prosecution Knows Belhadj's Fate"]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] London, Algiers, AL-HAYAH—Reliable Algerian sources told AL-HAYAH yesterday that five famous Algerian lawyers visited the public prosecution office in the capital to ask about the fate of Shaykh 'Ali Belhadj, No. 2 in the Islamic Salvation Front [FIS], who disappeared in early February. However, a senior official told them that no one knows his whereabouts except Mr. Elsaih [as transliterated], official in charge of the military public prosecution.

The sources added that the public prosecution official said in front of the five lawyers: I will tell you this, and you can inform the press of it: Neither the justice minister (Mohamed Teguia) nor the (civilian) public prosecution knows anything about Belhadj. The only person who knows is Elsaih, official in charge of the military public prosecution, which interrogated the FIS official in Blida prison following his arrest on 5 June 1991.

The sources said that FIS officials have been informed that the military intelligence service moved Belhadj from his house-arrest residence in Djenan El Mufti early last month to another detention center, reportedly in the desert. It was reported then that a military plane moved him directly to Tamanrasset (Tamassit).

This is the first move by the FIS' lawyers inside the country to inquire about the fate of Belhadj, about whom there has been no news since the beginning of February. [passage omitted]

Zeroual Pardons Prisoners on Occasion of 'Id al-Fitr

LD0103190095 Algiers Radio Algiers Network in Arabic 1700 GMT 1 Mar 95

[FBIS Translated Text] President Liamine Zeroual issued a pardon decree on the occasion of the blessed 'Id al-Fitr. The decree stipulates pardoning a number of those who were sentenced and those who have been given suspended sentences who are not involved in crimes related to terrorism, sabotage, infringement on state security, bribery, and embezzlement of public funds.

The decree includes full remittal of sentences for those who were given suspended sentences for one year or less, as well as those who are imprisoned and convicted for nine months or less. The decree also stipulates partial remittal ranging between six and 15 months, which will be granted to those whose terms of imprisonment or detention, or the remainder of their imprisonment or detention, range between nine months and 20 years. The remittal should not exceed a third of the sentence passed on criminal cases and half of those passed on misdemeanor cases.

Ministry: No Need for Independent Inquiry on Riot

LD0203010895 Algiers Radio Algiers Network in Arabic 2300 GMT 1 Mar 95

[FBIS Translated Text] In reply to the statement released by the Algerian League of Human Rights on the recent incidents at the Serkadji prison, the Justice Ministry today issued a clarification in which it said:

The League's statement begins by demanding the setting up of a commission of inquiry made up of figures independent from the authorities and the political parties who would carry out an investigation and inform public opinion about the truth. In this respect, it must be stressed, the Justice Ministry statement says, that the fact-finding commission was set up immediately after order was restored in that penal institution. This commission is made up of people from competent sectors who are more capable of discovering the truth and shedding light on the incidents, their motives and objectives, particularly as we are dealing with a subject whose dimensions and background we need to clarify fully to public opinion.

What is certain, the ministry's statement adds, is that the league knows better than anybody else that there is no alternative more able than the state to clarify this matter. It also seems quite normal to see that the League's statement contains some kind of contradiction in the assessment of the facts behind these incidents, given that this reflects the views aired in the press and the hasty allegations published by some foreign media.

The Justice Ministry statement adds that since the League did not to take into account the official statements which were released successively since the start of the incidents until yesterday, many questions contained in its statement have become redundant. These include, for example, their question on whether what happened in Serkadji prison was a mutiny or an attempted escape.

The first statement released on this subject had confirmed that both intentions existed and that the mutiny was used as a means to achieve another goal, namely the escape, since by its very character the institution does not offer any chance of escape.

Authorities Suspend Weekly After Prison Incident

MM0103160495 London AL-HAYAH in Arabic 1 Mar 95 p 4

[FBIS Translated Text] London, AL-HAYAH—A source close to the management of the weekly AL-WAJH AL-AKHAR has said that Algerian authorities have suspended the publication for six months. The source told

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AL-HAYAH over the telephone that the ban coincided with the Serkadji prison incident last week.

The source pointed out that the decision to suspend the publication, which deals with issues in a satirical manner, was issued at province level then through the Interior Ministry and local groups [al-jama'at al-mahalliyah]. The source said that the reason for the ban is not known. The publication has been suspended more than once in the past.

Egypt

Mubarak on Peace, NPT, Regional Ties

NC0103161795 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1500 GMT 1 Mar 95

[FBIS Translated Text] London, 1 Mar (MENA)—President Husni Mubarak has cautioned against hesitating to implement the Declaration of Principles between Israel and the PLO. He said this would harm the entire region and neighboring countries and might even harm Europe.

In an interview with Milhim Karam, chief editor of the London-based Lebanese magazine AL-HAWADITH, published tomorrow, Thursday, President Mubarak said the hesitation in implementing the declaration is an extremely serious matter. He said: I can see an Israeli hesitation that threatens the entire issue. I am afraid that if the issue fails we will not only return to square one, but we will even go to a point worse than where we were before.

President Mubarak added: If we yield to the forces that oppose peace, danger will grow bigger, violence and terrorism will flourish, and the peace process will end in an extremely bad way that would affect the region in general and Israel in particular.

President Mubarak said that nobody can force Egypt to put pressure on Syria to make it accept the security guarantees requested by Israel in return for its withdrawal from the Golan Heights. He stressed that Egypt will never be used to pressure Syria or any other friendly Arab state. President Mubarak added: If Egypt is convinced and believes that this conviction is compatible with the logic and will of the people, we explain our viewpoint to the friendly state.

Continuing, President Mubarak reiterated that Egypt yearns to maintain good relations with everyone. He lauded his ties with Syrian President Hafiz al-Asad. He said: We have a long history with Syria and there is a unity between us. We will not forget nor will we ignore our relations with Syria in the past, at present, or in the future.

Responding to a question about the blockade imposed by Israel on Lebanon's southern coasts, President Husni Mubarak said Israel must treat this issue calmly. He added: As far as Israel is concerned, security is the most important issue. Therefore, such security measures should be taken with the agreement of the two sides so that they will not harm any side. Tension will increase whenever measures are stepped up.

In response to another question about Israel's procrastination in implementing Resolution 425, which provides for its withdrawal from the south, President Mubarak said: We talked with Israel about the implementation of this resolution. But it seems that there is an agreement between Syria, Lebanon, and Israel that the peace process forge ahead concurrently between Israel and Lebanon on the one hand and between Israel and Syria on the other. President Husni Mubarak expressed the hope that Lebanon and the brothers in Syria will reach an agreement.

President Husni Mubarak stressed that the presence of a neighboring state possessing weapons of mass destruction upsets the balance in the Arab region. He said: Our dispute with Israel concerns the national security issue in the region. President Mubarak denied reports that Egypt agreed to sign the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty. He said: What we say in private is exactly the same thing as what we say in public.

Asked whether it is possible for Egypt to build a nuclear program should Israel insist on its stance, President Mubarak said: We call for making the area free of all kinds of weapons of mass destruction that threaten the lives of people. Therefore, is it possible that we would resort to something that we condemn?

President Mubarak discussed Egypt's relations with some Arab and African countries, affirming that relations with Saudi Arabia are always good and have been fraternal for a long time. He added that the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia is a pillar of the Arab world and King Fahd is a sincere and believing leader.

President Mubarak said that Egypt backs Somali unity and noted that Egypt has conferred with the warring factions there and has warned them that if they persist in their infighting it will mean the end of Somalia.

He affirmed that Algeria's stability is an important matter not only for the Arab nation but also for Europe.

Mubarak declared: I do not think that Algeria will collapse as some Europeans seem to believe.

He pointed out that King Husayn visited Egypt several times, remarking that inter-Arab differences continue to surface and disappear periodically.

He said: We have grown accustomed to this type of Arab reconciliation following a period of cool relations. It is the nature of the Arab world.

President Mubarak denied that the Egyptian parliament dropped Hala'ib as an independent electoral constituency, saying that the People's Assembly has not made any special decisions on this matter because Hala'ib is a

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small area that needs no constituency of its own but follows the governorate of which it is a part.

He added that former Sudanese Foreign Minister Husayn Sulayman Abu-Salih was a "good man" of high moral fiber who wished to work for the good of the two nations.

Mubarak added: If they want to replace him with another minister who is a hardliner, that is their concern and it does not affect us at all.

Mubarak told AL-HAWADITH that Egypt is constantly trying to bring the Arabs closer together but pointed out that this requires more time because the event that divided the Arabs, namely Iraq's invasion of Kuwait, was particularly cruel and unprecedented in Arab history.

Mubarak added that the Arab League is the home of all the Arabs and they must seek to strengthen it because any other home will not benefit them but will weaken them.

Concerning the Libyan-Western crisis, President Mubarak said: We urge the Americans, the British, and the French to find a solution to the issue. We are seeking to bring their views closer and we are keeping in mind that Libya is an Arab country and a neighbor with whom we have mutual interests.

Asked about Egyptian-U.S. relations, Mubarak said they are good.

He added: If we occasionally face some difficulties with each other, this is the nature of international relations.

President Mubarak told AL-HAWADITH that Egypt does not need to prove its historical role because it has already proved its presence and effective role with its resources, vitality, actions, and principles. He said the Egyptian role is as old as the region itself.

Asked who he thinks started the rumor that Saudi Arabia, Morocco, and Tunisia were going to conduct military exercises with Israel in March, President Mubarak said: Not us. We do not play such games.

Answering a question on Egypt's position on Iraq after the latter officially recognized Kuwait's borders, President Mubarak said that Saddam Husayn has been the cause of everything that has happened in Iraq. He has brought catastrophe to the Arab nation and divided it. Despite all this, Saddam blames King Fahd and us, he said. Had he consulted me, I would have warned him against invading Kuwait, but he never listens to anyone.

President Mubarak expressed his sadness over the plight of the Muslim Arab Iraqi people who are suffering bitterly as a result of their leader's reckless behavior.

Responding to another question, President Mubarak said that there are no contacts or relations between Egypt and Iran. We owed them some debts in return for which we are setting up factories for them, he said. This is all there is between us and Iran.

President Mubarak affirmed that Egypt is a secure country that cannot be harmed by terrorism.

In his interview with AL-HAWADITH magazine, President Mubarak denied that there are any prisoners of conscience in Egypt. He said this is unfair propaganda.

He described the report issued by the human rights organizations about Egypt as biased. He said it is based on what the lawyers of the terrorists and murderers said, as well as the members of dissolved and illegal groupings without resorting to governmental sources.

Answering another question, President Mubarak said that there is no tension between the government and the associations. He added that what we are doing now is a democratic measure to guarantee the fairness of representation from the associations and to allow the majority to practice their rights.

He denied that the government dissolved the Engineers' Association, clarifying that the reason why guards were placed outside was a legal decision as a result of some financial violations.

President Mubarak affirmed in his interview with AL-HAWADITH magazine that he will continue to strengthen democratic life in Egypt as well as the democratic, political, and economic transformation. He noted that the changes that started last year will continue through this year.

Answering a question, President Mubarak said he wondered why he should change the legislations and laws that are there. He affirmed that the government does not interfere in elections. He said that the coming elections will take place along the individual ticket system, according to the existing law without any changes. This is the system that society and all political parties follow.

Christopher Urged To 'Inject life' Into Oslo Accord

NC0203080795 Cairo AL-AHRAM in Arabic 27 Feb 95 p 4

[Commentary by 'Abd-al-'Azim Hammad from the "Foreign Policy" column: "If the Gaza-Jericho Agreement Fails"]

[FBIS Translated Text] It seems the option of a unilateral Palestinian decision canceling the Gaza-Jericho Agreement has become a possibility. Even though the spokesman for Yasir 'Arafat, chairman of the Palestinian Authority, denied that he is considering a return to Tunis, which means canceling the agreement, more than one Palestinian source has said publicly that the option of abrogation is on the cards of the Palestinian party, along with other options, such as freezing the negotiations or seeking to internationalize them, and announcing the truth on the stances of all the parties to

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embarrass them, since the Palestinians, should things reach this point, would have nothing to lose.

Although it is not easy to believe the Palestinians will resort to canceling the agreement, because this is still impermissible at least regionally and internationally, it is unwise to rule it out. This option will become inevitable in one case: If current reports prove that the Gaza-Jericho Agreement was considered "permissible" [muhallal] by Israel to facilitate the signing of a peace agreement with Jordan so as to "isolate" 'Arafat completely or leave him to die politically under siege in Gaza, in preparation for a solution of the West Bank problem within the framework of what has been known for years as the Jordanian option.

The Jordanian option is gaining prominence on the Israeli agenda after opposition Likud Bloc leader Binyamin Netanyahu advocated it. What the Israelis forget is that their consent and Jordan's—should it agree to this option—would be insufficient to peddle it. What counts is the approval of the Palestinians themselves, because this issue basically and essentially concerns them.

Should the Jordanian option be imposed on the Palestinians, 'Arafat would inevitably have to declare the abrogation of the Declaration of Principles agreement with Israel. In such a case, it is not 'Arafat's fate that would count, but the Palestinian people's reaction. We think the Palestinians would despair of all the parties such that they would not hesitate to bring down the temple on everyone.

No one wants this disturbing scenario, because the loss for all parties would be far greater than the Palestinian loss. During his forthcoming tour of the region, U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher must first and foremost inject life into the Palestinian-Israeli agreement before anything else.

Musa: NPT Position 'Final and Unequivocal'

MM0103160295 London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT in Arabic 1 Mar 95 p 1

[Report by Sawsan Abu-Husayn: "'Amr Musa Tells AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT: Egypt's Position on the Treaty Is Final and Unequivocal"]

[FBIS Translated Text] Cairo—Egyptian Foreign Minister 'Amr Musa has stated that Egypt would accept nothing less than an Israeli signature on the Nuclear Non, roliferation Treaty and the subjection of Israeli installations to inspection. "This position is final and unequivocal and not open to any nonsense."

In an exclusive statement to AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT, Musa emphasized that Egypt insists on refusing to sign the treaty or extend it for a long period unless Israel changes its negative position on the question of the proliferation of nuclear weapons.

The Egyptian foreign minister described the suggestion by some media that Egypt might sign the treaty as "idle talk. Egypt would not accept, as has been claimed, a statement in which Israel would promise to sign the treaty after two years because this is a political and serious matter, extremely serious."

Musa denied reports about the United States interceding with compromise solutions to end the dispute. He said that the acceptable solution is an Israeli signature, "particularly as it has a nuclear program with suspect dimensions and aims and Israel is an immediate neighbor of Egypt. That is why the current dialogue on this issue is very important for the future of regional security and of nuclear proliferation in the Middle East."

Envoy in Washington Views U.S. Ties, NPT

NC0203075395 Cairo MENA in Arabic 0607 GMT 2 Mar 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Cairo, 2 Mar (MENA)—Egypt's Ambassador in Washington Ahmad Mahir has stressed the profound relations between Egypt and the United States and noted the two countries' desire for cooperation despite differences in views.

In an interview with AL-JUMHURIYAH today, he described relations between the United States and Egypt as normal ties with a great deal of amity and some disagreement. He remarked that this is due to the two countries' policies and each one's regional and world role; thus it is natural for the two countries' views not to be identical.

He pointed out that there is no disagreement between the two countries on the principle of the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty [NPT] but the disagreement may be over the timing or the handling of the issue. He clarified: Since the issue concerns Egypt's national security and pan-Arab security and since the issue is also regional, what happens between us and Israel must not affect Egyptian-U.S. relations.

Ambassador Mahir reiterated that there are no disputes or disagreements between Egypt and the United States on the NPT. He said Egypt has repeatedly conveyed to the United States its eagerness to support this Treaty with all countries, including Israel, joining it.

Mahar commented on U.S. aid and the feeling that the American people extend aid to various countries despite U.S. domestic problems. He said there is a feeling in the United States that there are countries and regions with which cooperation must continue and that must be provided with aid. Egypt, he added, is at the head of these countries because it is a state with a moderate policy and is the key to stability in the Middle East, therefore it has been decided to continue the aid next year.

As regards the IMF and the World Bank, the Egyptian ambassador said: Egypt is cooperating with the two institutions on the basis of our economic reform, which

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we believe serves Egypt's interest. He added: The IMF and the World Bank have cooperated with us.

Concluding his interview, the Egyptian ambassador noted that the Egyptian role does not depend on anyone's will, as Egypt, throughout its history, has been the main power in the region. Egypt, he added, will remain the main power in the region whether someone likes it or not or whether someone tries to destroy it or not.

Parliamentary Bodies Urge Israel To Sign NPT

NC0203102395 Cairo MENA in Arabic 0707 GMT 2 Mar 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Cairo, 2 Mar (MENA)—The People's Assembly Defense and National Security Committee has declared its support for Egypt not signing the renewal of the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty [NPT] unless Israel signs it and accepts international inspection of its various nuclear installations through the International Atomic Energy Agency.

The committee noted that Israel possesses a nuclear arsenal but has not yet signed the Treaty.

In a report it compiled on the issue, the committee reiterated its strong support for President Husni Mubarak's initiative of April 1990 to free the Middle East of all weapons of mass destruction as a practical translation of Egypt's view on regional security requirements.

The committee stated that Egypt wants great importance to be attached to disarmament on the world and regional levels, because Middle East peace requires a military balance and agreement on equal and comprehensive arrangements to curb armament, something with which every country without exception must comply. Inequality leads to disorder in the desired balance.

The People's Assembly Arab Affairs Committee urged Israel to sign the Treaty and place its nuclear installations under international inspection and control if it really desires security and stability for the region.

A report compiled by the committee said the arms race in the region and the continuously growing Israeli military might compromise the balance of power, pose a direct threat to peace, and block a genuine and just settlement unless all parties consider the importance of controlling the arms race.

The committee urged the international community to secure a balance in Israel's acquisition of arms so that peace can be established and the region's countries will have time for development that seeks good things and progress for their nations.

Israel Said Building Reactor Near al-'Awja'

NC0203111895 Cairo AL-SHA'B in Arabic 21 Feb 95 p 1

[Report by 'Adil al-Bahnasawi]

[FBIS Translated Text] A responsible source at an Egyptian nuclear body has confirmed that Zionist experts are preparing an extensive area of the Negev Desert to build a new nuclear reactor 25 km from the Egyptian area of al-'Awja'.

The source said that the International Atomic Energy Agency told Israel it rejected the building of the reactor before it signs the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty, which is due to be extended in April.

The source added that Israel has chosen the city of Shefta [name as published] in the Negev Desert as the site for the new (450) [parenthesis as published] Megawatt reactor that will be imported from Russia. Israel is planning to introduce changes to the reactor so that it meets the same standards as Western ones; it will be helped in this by U.S. experts.

Nuclear Problem Said To Be 'Decisive Factor' for Peace

NC0203073095 Cairo AL-AHRAM in Arabic 27 Feb 95 p 8

[The "Close-Up" column: "Rabin Will Not Retreat"]

[FBIS Translated Text] The talks Israeli Foreign Minister Shim'on Peres held in Egypt failed to solve the dispute between Egypt and Israel over Egypt's demand that Israel sign the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty. Thus Peres' statement before leaving Israel—that the Israeli stance has not changed—has been confirmed. If there were points of agreement or disagreement in these talks, it is more likely that the points of disagreement formed the major ones.

Israel still insists that the threats to its security from Iraq, Iran, and Libya—illusory threats as they are—warrant its retaining its nuclear weapons free from international supervision. More important is that the problem of Israel's possession of nuclear weapons has caused no apprehension among other international circles. The Arab countries made no effort to raise this issue internationally. Egypt remains alone in striving and waging this battle on behalf of the Arab world, which is still deep in silence and apathy. All the Arab world has done is to make a few statements and run newspaper articles in support of the Egyptian stance, prompting Israel to believe that this is a bilateral problem that concerns Egypt alone.

In the absence of a strong Arab stance and in view of the U.S.- Israeli pressure and collusion, no change or retreat could be expected in the Israeli stance on this issue. Israel is currently using all its diplomatic shrewdness and ability to play with words to suggest that the problem does not concern Egypt and should worry no one, because Israel's lethal weapons will not be directed at Egypt, but at the other Arab and Islamic countries that have not entered into peace relations with Israel.

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This is Israel's stance just a few days after Israeli Prime Minister Rabin made a statement on the possibilities of an Arab- Israeli war and after Israel refused to allow Foreign Minister 'Amr Musa to visit its nuclear installations in Dimona although Musa is not an expert in nuclear affairs.

If there were points of agreement in Peres' recent talks, it is more likely that they revolved around the need to continue the peace process and not freeze the negotiations between Israel and the Palestinians or the talks on the Syrian track.

This winding road that is the peace process between Israel and the Palestinians may continue, taking one step forward and several steps backward. But "keeping" the Israeli nuclear problem unsolved or accepting cosmetic solutions that retain Israel's nuclear control of the Middle East will only lead to a false peace. It is fine to continue with the peace process if Israel intends to complete it. But the nuclear problem will remain the decisive factor in the fate of peace.

Radio Warns Against Exempting Israel From Treaty

NC0103160095 Cairo Arab Republic of Egypt Radio Network in Arabic 1240 GMT 1 Mar 95

[Commentary by 'Atif 'Umar: "The Security Requirements of Egypt and the Arabs Away From any Haggling"]

[FBIS Translated Text] In a few days, U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher will start a new tour of the Middle East region during which he will discuss, as political circles have stated, the Arab-Israeli peace march on the various tracks, particularly as nobody can deny that this march has virtually stopped on the Syrian track and has been hampered on the Palestinian track. New developments regarding the ban on the spread of nuclear weapons have cast dark shadows over Egyptian-Israeli relations after President Mubarak announced that Egypt will not sign this agreement as long as Israel does not sign it. This was followed by an unjust campaign against Foreign Minister 'Amr Musa as a result of his extensive activities in the diplomatic arena to reveal the dangers of double standards in dealing with the people in the region, particularly when the issue is linked with Arab security, development, and identity.

Despite the demagogic campaigns spearheaded by extremist Israeli elements who reject peace with the Arabs, 'Amr Musa has conveyed the Arab pulse, expressing it with great credibility. The Western view changed; it was a view that sympathized somewhat with Israel and tried to convince the Arab and African sides to sign this agreement so that the agreement could gain the kind of support that would make it permanent, the kind of agreement any violation of which would be a violation of international legitimacy, and with it all the dangers this entails.

The sanctions currently being imposed on Iraq are one example of how this legitimacy is being violated. The purposeful Egyptian diplomatic activity, despite the various international pressures, has revealed to the rest of the world the dangers of favoring one country in the Middle East region and exempting it from signing the agreement despite it having nuclear heads and missiles capable of carrying these heads to strike the furthest points in the Arab region. This is what prompted the Arab League, based on its concern for the countries it represents, to participate in clarifying the dangers to which the Arab region will be subjected if Israel becomes the only one to own these kinds of weapons and refuses to sign the Treaty.

We do not believe the Arab sides can forget the statements [former] Israeli Defense Minister Moshe Dayan made before the October 1973 war. He said that Israel has an arm long enough to reach the oil wells in Saudi Arabia or any point in the Gulf, and it is its right to demand a share of the oil wealth in the Arab region.

The history of Arab-Israeli relations is teeming with issues. Recent opinion polls reveal that many Israelis still reject coexistence with the Palestinians. The aggressive attacks against the Palestinian people prove this point, in addition to the continuing attempts to hamper the Oslo agreement in which the PLO accepted the bare minimum of its demands to confirm its true desire for a real and permanent peace with Israel. That said, the Israeli maneuvers seem to know no end as long as international circumstances and current regional and Arab conditions help them. Based on these facts, Egypt is taking concerted steps toward addressing international public opinion, which has shown an interest in eliminating hotbeds of tension from regions that have an effect on international conditions. One of these is the Middle East region. Egypt has played a role in revealing the dangers of pushing through this agreement in the Arab region, the dangers for the rich and poor and near and far alike. Nuclear missiles do not break their targets up into separate nationalities. All that matters is that these nationalities are all Arab.

The efforts of Egyptian diplomacy have succeeded on every level in revealing all the facts regarding the exposure of the region to new conflicts, which we do not believe threaten only one party and exclude others. The American role Warren Christopher will be carrying out has become very important, with all the Arab peoples realizing the dangers they will be exposed to when an extremist group controls government in Israel. Since Egypt realizes the scope and dangers of this issue, it knows the new standards and balances. The vital interests of the region's people will always triumph, whether this power likes it or not. The security requirements of the Egyptians and the Arabs will remain far removed from any bargains.

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Article Views U.S. Human Rights Report

NC0203105395 Cairo AL-AKHBAR in Arabic 26 Feb 95 pp 1, 6

[Article by Chief Editor Jalal Duwaydar: "Yes to Differences Between Friends, No to Custodianship and Hegemony"]

[FBIS Translated Text] No respectable state concerned with its dignity, sovereignty, and free will would allow another country, no matter which country, to interfere in its internal affairs or pose as guardian over its affairs.

No country that is committed to its independence would allow itself to submit to blackmail, the objective of which is control, hegemony, and making political, security, or economic concessions that go against national or pan-Arab interests.

Yes, it is only natural for differences to erupt between countries that are linked by real friendship and mutual interests; but under no circumstance is it acceptable for these differences to prompt one side to apply pressure to the other side to accept its viewpoint. When this happens, the relationship changes from equal rights to subservience, something that is totally rejected.

Out of my commitment to these principles I felt comfortable with the answers given by Dennis Ross, the special U.S. coordinator for the Middle East peace process, to questions from correspondents on Egyptian-American relations, not because he described them as very strong, but because he said they are based on real participation to realize the interests of the two countries. The U.S. official admitted that sometimes differences emerge over particular issues, which is something very natural between the best of friends. But they are quickly ironed out, because what unites Washington and Cairo is much more important than what divides them.

Although I was comfortable with these statements, what I wish and hope for is that these statements acquire credibility so that the popular saying might apply to them, the saying that goes "I hear what you say and I like it; I see what you do and am surprised."

I would have liked Dennis to confirm this credibility by asking Israel to sign the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty instead of beating around the bush and talking in general terms, which normally reeks of double standards and fear of broaching the subject of Israel's refusal to sign.

But I agree with this U.S. official in that not signing the Treaty is in no one's interest. I add to this that exemption from signing is a danger for all, as is not realizing the objective of this Treaty and the absence of peace and stability in the Middle East.

Dr. Usamah al-Baz, first Foreign Ministry under secretary and director of the President's Office for Political Affairs, was very clear, frank, and decisive, as usual, in defending Egyptian pan-Arab and national interests. In statements to the television program "Good Morning Egypt," al-Baz stated that it is Egypt's right to adopt particular stances on some vital issues pertaining to its national security. He noted that it is not necessary for these stances to gain the approval of any other party, noting in this way the differences with the United States and Israel over signing the Treaty. Dr. al-Baz criticized the United States for interfering in some countries' human rights affairs and for issuing verdicts on this issue. He said the U.S. human rights report on Egypt, which was prepared by nongovernmental organizations, was the reason for the tension in Egyptian-U.S. relations.

Dr. al-Baz said it is unfortunate that these organizations give themselves the right to issue verdicts about global human rights conditions as though they are a government above the world.

No doubt what Dr. Usamah al-Baz said is absolutely true. I want to add that these reports are always in tandem with the trends and interests of U.S. policy. U.S. human rights reports always disregard human rights violations, which are numerous, inside the United States itself. In most cases the United States flouts these reports, which demonstrates its bias, if they conflict with U.S. interests, as happened regarding human rights reports in China, when President Clinton decided to suspend them and signed the trade agreement giving Beijing rights to most favored nation status.

The world cannot forget the massacres of black Americans when they rebelled against maltreatment and torture by the police. The world still remembers the U.S. security forces' assault with artillery and rockets on the [Waco] headquarters of U.S. citizen David Koresh to kill him after he detained dozens of his supporters.

What is happening, what we can see and hear, shows that confronting acts of violence and breaking the law in the United States is fine and legal, but exercising this right in any other country is something relative, which is subject to whims, interests, and the assessments of U.S. human rights organizations, not principles and values. Incidentally, many people are wondering about U.S. human rights reports on Israeli violations of Palestinian human rights and about events in Bosnia and Chechnya, which are crimes that are handled perfunctorily.

What Washington and its nongovernmental human rights societies are doing does not differ much from what the human rights societies are doing in Egypt. Most officials in charge of these organizations were responsible for the most horrific violations of human rights in Egypt in the fifties, sixties, and seventies. In their attempt to look for a role and, perhaps out of a desire to atone for their old crimes, they seek to defame Egypt through these false and unbalanced so-called human rights reports, which support violence against legitimacy and have the sole aim of striking at stability in Egypt. Part of this attitude, which is based on "twisting" the facts, is creating a furor regarding the rights of criminals who kill and terrorize innocent people and threaten the

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stability of our homeland, while the rights of the victims of these criminals are given minimum attention.

We are all opposed to the violation of human rights without discrimination between the crimes committed by individuals for political reasons or in implementation of foreign schemes and the crimes committed by any government department. Since the Egyptian Constitution considers the crime of violating human rights to be a crime that will not become invalid in time, we would like to ask about the guarantees that safeguard the rights of the homeland, its various agencies, and citizens against criminal acts aimed at wreaking havoc in their lives, security, stability, and future.

Daily Urges Arabs To Return Iraq to Arab Fold

NC0103223095 Cairo MENA in Arabic 2155 GMT 1 Mar 95

[FBIS Translated Text] The newspaper AL-AHRAM has called on the Arab countries to quickly take steps to return Iraq to the Arab ranks and not leave it alone as a hostage of the U.S. calculations. In a commentary in Thursday's issue, the paper expresses its surprise at the U.S. insistence on keeping the sanctions imposed on Iraq as long as possible under the pretext that remains of weapons of mass destruction still exist in Iraq. The United States maintains this position while it launches an enormous campaign against harming Israel's nuclear program and means of carrying its weapons.

AL-AHRAM notes the intensive U.S. efforts with the UN Security Council member states to ensure the necessary legal quorum to confront attempts by the Russian Federation, France, and the PRC to make the Security Council adopt a new resolution to reduce the sanctions imposed on Iraq or at least to release a new statement indicating Iraq's positive cooperation to pave the way for lifting the sanctions or reducing them at the next sessions.

Over 800 Islamists Reportedly Held 'Incommunicado'

NC0103132495 Paris AFP in English 1249 GMT 1 Mar 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Cairo, March 1 (AFP)—Egyptian authorities have been holding more than 800 Islamist prisoners incommunicado for over 14 months, forbidding visits by family and lawyers, the Egyptian Organization for Human Rights [EOHR] said Wednesday [1 March].

Detainees in the high-security block of Turah prison, nicknamed the Scorpion, "have not been able to contact their families or their lawyers" since December 20, 1993, an EOHR report said.

The continuing ban contradicts an administrative court ruling issued in April 1994 which abolished the prohibition of visits, the rights group said.

The court overruled arguments by the interior ministry that the measure was necessary to prevent contacts between "terrorist elements inside the prison and their collaborators outside," it added.

The EOHR believed that the ban was "an attempt by officials of the ministry of the interior to obscure the deteriorating living conditions and to prevent prisoners from complaining about torture and ill-treatment they have been subjected to."

The Scorpion was built in Turah prison to hold prisoners connected with terrorist activities.

Human rights organizations estimate the number of political prisoners in Egypt at between 15,000 and 20,000, of which 60 percent belong to the militant al-Jama'ah al-Islamiyah, 25 percent to the Jihad group and 15 percent to other opposition organizations, particularly the Muslim Brotherhood.

The interior ministry has stated that only 3,000 prisoners are being held under Egypt's state of emergency laws, which include detainees charged in drug cases.

The government has been battling Islamic militants bent on setting up an Islamic government in a conflict that has left more than 670 dead over the past three years.

Police Arrest 3 Fugitive 'Terrorists' in Cairo

NC0103181495 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1725 GMT 1 Mar 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Cairo, 1 Mar (MENA)—Security forces this morning arrested three fugitive terrorists in the Hada'iq al- Qubbah area in Cairo. The terrorists were sticking anti-regime leaflets.

Revealing the incident, a responsible security source at the Interior Ministry said: As Captain Mahmud Farraj, assistant chief of intelligence at Hada'iq al-Qubbah, and his escort were passing in the area at 0530 today, they spotted three persons sticking leaflets on a wall of Misr and al-Sudan street. The source said that when the police force tried to stop them, one of the terrorists attacked police sergeant Ibrahim Muhammad Ibrahim with a knife, leaving him with neck injuries. The source said that the force opened fire, injuring one of the terrorists. The other two terrorists were arrested, he added.

During the interrogation it was discovered that they are wanted fugitive terrorists. The wounded were transferred to the hospital. The prosecution has been notified.

83 Repentant 'Extremists' Released on 'Id al-Fitr

NC0103140095 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1230 GMT 1 Mar 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Cairo, 1 Mar (MENA)—Eighty-three detained extremists who proclaimed their repentance were released today on the orders of Interior Minister Hasan al-Alfi. The release coincided with the eve of the blessed 'Id al-Fitr holiday.

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Every released detainee was given 200 pounds on the occasion. Other detainees to be released soon were given 50 pounds each.

This is the fifth group of repentants to be released. The first four groups were released in batches of 38, 28, 30, and 54 prisoners respectively.

Released Prisoner Rejects Rights Reports

NC0103193195 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1655 GMT 1 Mar 95

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Cairo, 1 Mar (MENA)—The repentant terrorists who were released today under a decision from Interior Minister Hasan al-Alfi from Tura prison affirmed that they reject all kinds of violence, terrorism, and ideological and religious extremism. They also affirmed their full determination to return to the ranks of society and become productive elements in all sectors of life, after getting on the right track and following the correct teachings of religion. [passage omitted]

In an open meeting with a number of the repentant extremists, 22-year old Samir Mahmud Shuqayr, born in Cairo, affirmed that he discovered during the time he was in prison, which he spent among a number of extremists, their fake beliefs and their false teachings among the prisoners. The differences in opinion often ended up in fist fights and bloodshed.

Samir Shuqayr added that the beliefs of the extremists were the result of wrong explanations of the Koran. He affirmed that there is a big difference between the reality of Islam and the tolerance it preaches on the one hand, and the black ideas they promote on the other.

He clarified that all the reports published by human rights organizations inside and outside Egypt have nothing to do with the reality of the situation. He described their reports as untrue. He affirmed that the terrorists try in various ways to create a gap between the police and the youths and that the real pressure on the youths comes from the extremists. [passage omitted]

Part Three of al-Ansari's Letter to Clinton

NC2802164695 Cairo AL-JUMHURIYAH in Arabic 23 Feb 95 pp 1, 3

[Article by Mahfuz al-Ansari: "Personal for President Clinton: (3) The New Alliance...Against Whom? Islam and the Double-Standard Policy..."—punctuation as published]

[FBIS Translated Text] U.S. President Clinton, I disclosed "our secret" to you at the beginning of my talk or message to you.

That is, that in case of a crisis, in confronting danger, and in days of survival, we unite, we melt into one person, we forget our differences, surpass our difficulties, become patient, forbear, sacrifice, and offer boundlessly until we cross over to the safety zone.

What I disclosed to you is "the nation's secret." Maybe it is inappropriate or suitable for someone to reveal "his nation's secret" to others because it is the element of strength and esteem for the nation. But my aim is to save you from miscalculation, misjudgment, and error.

Old states and nations, and well-established civilizations, have special dealings; they are not handled with pressure and blackmail, nor with threat or war. Egypt is of this kind. Astonishingly, you have many, varied experiences with this, all of which prove this fact. Others' experiences with Egypt are also of the same quality; these others are the Soviets, Israelis, and even the Europeans.

The Soviets dealt with 'Abd-al-Nasir and with al-Sadat during difficult days and years of wars and occupation. The Europeans, especially the British and French, dealt with Egypt before and during the nationalization of the [Suez] Canal and afterward during the tripartite aggression. Israel has had experiences with Egypt during its numerous wars and aggressions.

In all these dealings and with you, pressure yielded no result and there was no place for capitulation and relinquishing rights. In all circumstances, land represented the honor, national sovereignty represented the Constitution, freedom of will and independence of decisionmaking formed a principle, nonsubservience and independence formed a ruling law, and equal dealing with others a basis and standard.

What is notable is that none of you—the United States or Israel—remember or you pretend to forget this as if you were dealing with us for the first time or as if it were your first experience.

When Egypt calls for a tripartite summit in Alexandria between Mubarak, Fahd, and al-Asad, the world turns upside down and world peace and security is threatened. You and Israel expected the three leaders to be intent on launching a devastating, all-out, and destructive war. You thought you should take measures, rally the allies, and mobilize energies to face up to this danger.

On the other hand, you and Israel have the right to do anything. You are entitled to proclaim a free-trade zone in North America, the NAFTA. You are entitled to sign a partnership deal with the Asian Pacific countries. You are also entitled to rebuild, modernize, and expand the membership of NATO with the 15 EU member states. You are entitled to extend NATO's scope of military operations and tasks and then complement its defense and assault responsibility with economic, trade, political, and technological responsibilities and to deploy your nuclear weapons in the NATO countries.

You have the right to invade a small and poor country like Haiti. You have the right to pursue "the game in Afghanistan" by replacing Golboddin Hekmatyar and

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his followers of the mujahidin with a new military squad of students and teachers known as the Taleban. You are entitled to supply them with tanks, armored vehicles, helicopters, and Soviet-made MiG-23 aircraft. You are entitled to drive them from the south, from Islamabad and bases in Pakistan to continue their march northward to the capital Kabul, bring down nine provinces on their way in a few days' time, and stand at the capital's fortified gates demanding the surrender of Borhanoddin Rabbani and his government.

This happens at time when the UN envoy was about to complete the formation of a provisional council which was to pave the way for the new national authorities to maintain unity.

Mr. President, on the surface, this action may appear to be sound as it has ended the activity of the gangs of plunder, murder, and the narcotics trade. The matter could seem to be part of a national movement that has grown tired of three years of chaos, which have claimed the lives of tens of thousands, including 20,000 in Kabul alone, and left 100,000 people wounded in Kabul itself.

But the facts and information say that those who have recruited, assembled, mobilized, trained, financed, armed, and made the war plans during the resistance of the Soviet troops occupying Afghanistan—the golden triangle made up of the three countries that have assumed the task of planning, providing bases, and financing—are themselves the ones behind the emergence of this new, religious, and political faction "Taleban," or the group of armed students, just as they formed the mujahidin, who are now divided between Rabbani and Hekmatyar. On the Pakistani territory and at the borders [with Afghanistan], training camps were set up. Retired Pakistani military intelligence officers supervised and ran the camps, in terms of preparation, arms, and financing. Under the patronage of your country's agencies, particularly the Central Intelligence Agency, the entire operation was run smoothly. Batches of cadres were graduated from the schools of murder, propaganda, and agitation. From these camps emerged the violent and professional groups of political Islam, to be sent later to Arab and Muslim countries. You started them in the early eighties with the entrance of the Soviet Army into Afghanistan. They lasted even after the Soviets left the country. And here they are today developing and producing fresh groups that operate within the miserable country and preparing, graduating, and training people to operate outside it. And after this, you still accuse our country, launch campaigns against it, and try to impose terms and dictate demands.

Allow me, President Clinton, to ask, and test my information with you. Is this the reason why two yardsticks are used in dealing with the groups of the "violent and extremist Islam"? In Palestine you demand that they be murdered, slaughtered, and annihilated and that this be done at the hands of their fellow Palestinians, the police of the newborn Authority. This comes at a time when these Palestinians are practicing "legitimate violence" in accordance with the resolutions of the UN General Assembly, which recognized "armed struggle" as a legitimate right to liberate the land and restore usurped rights. Even if there is a reasonable argument and logic behind rejecting and denouncing the acts of violence at present so as not to poison the atmosphere and obstruct the peace march, the picture on the other side is provocative. Settlements are being expanded and there is a reluctance in implementing the Declaration of Principles and in extending the scope and functions of the Palestinian Authority by holding elections and redeploying the Israeli troops. All these are provocative Israeli measures coupled with repression, murder, constant raids against south Lebanon, and a freeze on any movement or progress along the Lebanese and Syrian tracks. All these provocative measures cannot but serve as a strong motive for violent resistance and rejection through suicide operations.

On the other side, we see a completely different attitude toward more extremist, violent, and terrorist Islamists without a reasonable or logical justification. If your country, Mr. President, and Israel are demanding that Palestinian Islamists be completely finished off, we find that you, Mr. President, are putting pressure and urging that the most violent and ferocious among them in Algeria and Egypt join power and the political life. You are demanding, pressuring, and arguing that the Islamists in Algeria have a right to sit with the government and dictate their conditions and that the two sides should reach a settlement allowing these Islamists to participate in something. This comes at a time when violence in Algeria has reached unimaginable limits. The statistics available, and they are underestimated, speak of 40,000 people killed in the confrontation between the police and the Islamists' armed group in two or three years. The information speaks of murder and decapitation, as if they are perfecting the process of slaughter after having perfected murder!!

News agencies and media bring us up-to-the-minute reports and stories about the assassination of writers, journalists, broadcasters, scientists, and university professors. We also receive news reports on schools set ablaze and booby-trapped cars blown up on streets congested with pedestrians and innocent people. News reports also talk about the killing of foreigners and men of religion. This premeditated, unjustified killing is meant to provoke the authority and harm the regime. It also is an attempt to shake the rule.

Under these circumstances, how can we distinguish between the Islamists, the representatives of political violence in Algeria, Egypt, and Afghanistan on the one hand, and those Islamists, who include groups fighting under the banner of the National Islamic Resistance Movement in Palestine and Lebanon and resisting the occupation and others who are on good terms with you on the other hand?

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How can we pass the death sentence against those who resort to the logic of righteousness and justice and to the legitimate resistance? While others are threatened, intimidated, charged with violating human rights, and threatened with losing aid if the Islamists in Algeria, Egypt, or others are not allowed to enjoy the freedom of political action, take part in power, conduct broad dialogue on an equal footing with those you support.

Are we supposed to change our country into a new Afghanistan in our region, and into Pakistan, a staging point for planning and preparations, and then become a safe haven in times of need? Or are we supposed to let chaos prevail and allow the groups of destruction and ruination to kill, burn, curb progress, and build bridges between our country and yours? Is this the ideal example for the conflict of civilizations or is it the dialogue of cultures, ideologies, and religions?

Believe me, this is not the time for discussion or whether the political Islam groups are entitled to conduct a dialogue with the state. It is also not the time to refute or discuss the logic of the state in Algeria or Egypt, or any other place that a dialogue with the killers is not advisable. Crimes should be dealt with by law and punishment. This is the logic and this is the concept emphasized by [al-Azhar] grand imam during our dialogue with him, which is published on the opposite page.

But my message to you is an attempt to get to know your logic which can distinguish between the political Islam faction and its armed groups whose attacks in Afghanistan, Algeria, and Egypt are legitimate, but are prohibited in Palestine because these attacks disturb the "Israeli angel."

Mr. President, you and Israel left everything, even peace, as I mentioned, and started focusing on Egypt. You directed your campaign on Foreign Minister 'Amr Musa after Rabin's bullets have gone astray as he was threatening to wage war against Egypt and its people. After "the well-known punishment" document prepared by the director of political planning desk at the Israeli Foreign Ministry, you centered your attacks on Egypt and its stand on the issue of the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty. You focused on Minister 'Amr Musa as if he were the owner of a shop specializing in diplomatic services and political trouble making. You tried to drive a wedge between the minister and the state. You thought that this was the key for the regime to stop its policy. You believed that the scapegoat was ready to be sacrificed so that the air could be cleared and relations returned to normal between Cairo, Washington, and Tel Aviv.

Allow me here to say honestly that you do not know this country or the "nature of its leader and president." You do not know Mubarak and his stands in support of his men, let alone if this is his policy and his option. Let us return here to the nuclear issue. But before we delve into the matter, let me remind you of some historical facts and background. Remember when French President and leader de Gaulle and London and its leaders announced that they did not trust "the U.S. policy," in a word, Washington? On that day, Paris and London announced that they doubted and did not believe that Washington would direct its nuclear missiles against Moscow or Stalingrad should Moscow hit any of the European capitals, and that your country would not use its nuclear deterrent unless New York or San Francisco were subjected to a Soviet nuclear strike. For that reason, the two insisted on establishing their own nuclear deterrent force, despite your umbrella that covers their heads, as we have stated. So why deny us this right, the right of nuclear safety, which we demand in the form or nuclear disarmament, not acquisition? Why deprive us, attack us, antagonize us, and put pressure on us while you and your country are proliferating this weapon nowadays, when you go with your nuclear and super-nuclear weapons to the EU's 15 member states, most of which are not nuclear? Why rule that it is too much for us to have the honor of defending our nation and our life?

We know, honorable President, that you are preparing for war and training your forces inside and outside the country, on U.S. and European territory, on the techniques of a third world war, and perhaps this is why you are proliferating your nuclear weapons while combating proliferation! But we also realize your dilemma while searching for the enemy against whom you, or your successors, will launch war and direct fire. We ask: Do we cross your mind, and the minds of your friends in Tel Aviv, as among these enemies?!

If you and your political and military staff have identified the targets and selected the "enemies," the reports coming from Washington and various European capitals say that your remaining forces in Europe do not know for certain who the next enemy is. We know that the leaders in your country and in Europe are watching out for developments that may threaten West European and U.S. security and are questioning the feasibility of expanding NATO to include and cover with its nuclear umbrella countries such as Hungary, the Czech Republic, Slovakia, and Poland. Perhaps we may dare to say that the expansion in this direction is meant to besiege and throw a "belt" around Russia. We know that the EU, your ally across the ocean, does not need soldiers, aircraft, or weapons. What it needs is your great superiority in the field of satellites, highly accurate electronic devices, the ability to reach the farthest place on earth wherever there is "suspicion" of a danger, and the ability for rapid deployment to discipline and deter troublemakers.

Naturally, honorable President of the Americans, we are not like you and are not trying to be. But a slight bit of your concerns "haunts" us. It preoccupies us, disturbs our sleep, and "spoils our life." Frankly, it is a "security concern," a "concern over a danger," a "lesson about treachery," "memories of an aggression," and a "full determination and energy for survival."

We realize and appreciate the greatness of your responsibility, the magnitude of the security worries that you

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have, the concerns about dangers and threats that are on your mind, and your care and custody for interests that are as broad as the entire earth, as deep as the ocean, and as high as God's seven skies. While appreciating and, realizing all this and praying to God Almighty, from the bottom of our hearts...!! that you succeed, and you are capable of succeeding, you should at least appreciate our position, go along with our "simple" request, and realize our need for safety and reassurance like you, the same as you demand and even fight for the security of others: Israel, Mr. President.

We are not requesting "security" armed with a "nuclear shield" that you may grant us. Just a few "bombs" not reaching the number of bombs in the Israeli arsenal. Five or ten would be enough for deterrence and protection. We are not requesting security with this weapon which, if you refuse to be part of the annual aid, we would pay for "in cash" at full price. Also, we are not requesting technical aid in our research that may enable us to manufacture "our bombs" with our own hands. We are not requesting this or that. What we are requesting is that our security and peace be guaranteed by removing, not possessing or manufacturing, nuclear weapons. We have only one condition for this:

We want this principle to govern all parties—we and our neighbors and the regional countries. We must all submit to the provisions of the agreement—control and inspection. We are required to sign it in April. I think that with this simple request, Mr. President, we are not sidestepping or asking for more than you are demanding from others. Your country was on the verge of involvement in military action and distant and serious war with North Korea because it refused to obey the provisions of the NPT. You did this although North Korea is thousands of miles away from your country and is unable to threaten you in any way. Even if, as you said, it could threaten its neighbor, your dear friend South Korea. Israel, Mr. President, is our neighbor and its nuclear weapons threaten us. If South Korea is your friend, we also are your friends, or that is what we think. I even spoke once about "our love for your country." So why this discrimination? Why this anger? Why do you exempt Israel from the equation and speak on its behalf? Why are you accusing us of standing against U.S. national security just because we adopt such a stand and make a simple request out of fear for our security and because we aspire to peace?

Allow me, President Clinton, to open my heart and ask you frankly to let me express a concern that is bothering me. Have you and Israel changed your mind about the peace option, plan, and tracks? Are you content with what has been achieved? Do you think that the Arab barriers of rejection have fallen, that the Arab acceptance of Israel reigns supreme, that the doors of cooperation, dealing, and integration have been opened, and that the chances of domination, leadership, and hegemony are available without obstacles?

Do you think that retreating from completing the peace agreement on the Palestinian front is a necessity and that straining relations between Egypt on the one hand and you and Israel on the other is necessary for unilateral control of the region and defining its role and relations? Or are these the new global arrangements that imposed a change in strategy and developing tactics in line with the concept of promoting the Western-U.S.-European alliance and rebuilding NATO with a new concept and new missions that may involve economics, politics, trade, competition, technology, as well as military and security aspects? The new form of NATO, as organizer of the affairs of the whole world and guardian of its security that metes out punishment against any opponent, is what imposed keeping "peace" in the Middle East where it has reached until further notice.

Believe me, Mr. President, I do have this bad suspicion because there are many signs to support it, but I still hope I am wrong.

It is not true that the opening Israel made in the minds, hearts, cities, markets, or projects of a number of Arab countries is a permanent one; what happened was a "tricky opening" called "the false peace"!

What Israel has achieved can be maintained only if a just peace is achieved on all fronts.

The guarantee is to proceed on the road of agreements and to meet all obligations.

The guarantee is to move toward the fronts that are still closed in the Golan and south Lebanon.

You should not believe, Mr. President, and your friends in Tel Aviv should not believe either that any [Arab] ruler, merchant, or businessmen can ignore these facts and allow himself or his country to deal and cooperate with Israel while it is still keeping the Arab land and denying the Palestinian people their remaining rights and lands.

Do not believe that the electrified walls which Israel is now building around its people to separate the Arabs and the Jews and to isolate the Palestinian land which it wants to annex, along with the Palestinians' capital, Jerusalem, which Israel has been working to Judaize and usurp, can ensure safety, achieve stability, or confiscate rights.

All this is shaky and unstable.

In concluding my letter, let me stress to you, Mr. President, that:

—We in Egypt are eager for intimate relations with the United States.

—We are eager for, and adhering to a just and fair peace.

—We in Egypt no longer have a complex called Israel, a complex of hatred or a complex of superiority.

—And as the case has always been with us—and this applies to all nations with civilization and history—our strength lies in our honesty and in our ability to say the truth loud and clear, without exaggeration or

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relinquishment. The matter is the dignity of a nation and the security of a homeland.

With best regards.

Libya

'Last Prison' Closed; 305 Prisoners Released

LD0103192495 Tripoli JANA in Arabic 1800 GMT 1 Mar 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Tripoli, 1 Mar (JANA)—In implementation of the great green document on human rights in the masses' era and of the law on consolidating the freedom resulting from it, in celebration of the 18th anniversary of the proclamation of setting up the people's authority and in adherence with the decision to eliminate and destroy prisons, the last prison in the Great Jamahiriyah was destroyed and its 305 inmates were released today.

Morocco

Egyptian Detonates Bomb in Russian Consulate

LD0103135995 Rabat MAP in English 1247 GMT 1 Mar 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Rabat, Mar. 01 (MAP)—An Egyptian national was severely injured Tuesday [28 February] when a bomb he had on him blast at the Russian consulate in Rabat, sources close to the Interior Ministry said. [as received] The police rescue team arrived a little while after a call by the consulate. It found the body of a person gravely hurt in the consulate.

The man, Khalid Ahmad Mahmud Awad, was sent to the Ibnou Sina hospital. He holds a passport dated in Heliopolis [Egypt] and issued in 1990. He was visiting Morocco in his capacity as a representative of an Egyptian publishing house. First enquiry reveals that he went to the consulate to apply for an entry visa to Russia and when he was received by the consul, he started to speak incoherently in Arabic and English about the safety of his wife, who is a Russian living in Egypt, the same source added.

Awad then threatened the consul with a knife forcing him to flee into the next room at which time a bomb he had on him went off wounding him severely.

Algerian Envoy, King Hassan Discuss UMA Affairs

LD0103134995 Algiers Radio Algiers Network in Arabic 1200 GMT 1 Mar 95

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Slimane Cheikh, Algerian culture minister and envoy of the head of state Liamine Zeroual, held talks with the Moroccan monarch [King Hassan II] on the situation in the Arab Maghreb Union [UMA].

In a statement he made to Algerian news agency, Slimane Cheikh said he had taken notes of King Hassan II's ideas on the main problems of UMA and the Arab world. [passage omitted]

Sudan

Minister on Iraqi Embargo, Eritrean Military Build-Up

EA0103162295 Omdurman Republic of Sudan Radio Network in Arabic 0430 GMT 1 Mar 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Dr. Ghazi Salah al-Din, minister of state at the Foreign Ministry, speaking from the Foreign Ministry's regular forum said the move by the U.S. delegate to the United Nations, Madeleine Albright, in respect of a number of member states of the UN Security Council as part of an attempt to prolong the blockade imposed on Iraq revealed that Washington had now been put on the defensive. He said this portended positively for Iraq's interests. He said efforts to bring about the lifting of the embargo against Iraq emanated from within the Arab house in a spirit of Arab harmony.

Referring to reports about an Eritrean military build-up on the border with Sudan and its effect on Eritrea in its capacity as a member of the mediation committee of the Intergovernmental Authority on Drought and Development, Dr. Ghazi Salah al-Din said the reports were exaggerated. He expressed the hope that the clouds darkening the sky of relations between the two countries would disperse and that the Eritrean leadership would make themselves aware of the road they were choosing.

Tunisia

*Regime Continues Focus on Economic Stability

95AF0050D Paris LE MONDE in French 22-23 Jan 95 p 3

[Article by Jean-Pierre Tuquoi: "Tunisian President Seeks To Appeal to Middle Class by Encouraging Consumption"]

[FBIS Translated Text] Wedged between an Algeria in trouble and a Libya that is adrift, Tunisia, by contrast, looks like an oasis of peace and prosperity. The Islamists there have been reduced to silence by repression. The opposition has hardly any say in matters. But the economy is flourishing. In 1994 the country showed a growth of nearly 5 percent in gross domestic product. Public finance is sound—the budget deficit is less than 2 percent of the gross national product. Inflation is moderate, and the trade balance improved noticeably last year. The only black mark is unemployment. Young city dwellers, especially those with no skills, have little chance of finding a job.

In his speeches, President Zine El Abidine Ben Ali constantly reiterates that economic growth is "the cornerstone" of a "sound" society—meaning, in plain language, one free of Islamists—but also that "the strength

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and invulnerability of a society reside essentially in the solidity and size of the middle class." Those are not just empty words. Concealed behind the talk is a strategy for pampering a "middle class" adorned with every virtue.

For months now, Tunisians have been able to afford—on credit—the "nec plus ultra" in electric household appliances, especially huge American refrigerators that make Tunisian models pale into insignificance. In a speech delivered on 7 November 1993 to mark the sixth anniversary of his accession to power, President Habib Bourguiba's successor went further by proposing to "put on the domestic market a small-engined car...that would be within the reach of all families earning an average income and make it easier for them to get around and tend to their affairs."

Reduced Offer

Relayed by a controlled press, President Ben Ali's idea was the topic of many conversations and made thousands of Tunisians dream of acquiring a car on which, the government promised, the tax would be reduced to 20 percent of the before-tax price compared to the 100 percent collected on more sophisticated models. Then things got bogged down. "One wonders whether the project will ever see the light of day," commented one diplomat stationed in Tunis. Not that the chief of state has abandoned his project. But his initiative, being dictated by political considerations and improvised from start to finish, is running into unsuspected practical problems.

Tunisian authorities made the mistake of using technical criteria to define the "people's car." And the half dozen foreign manufacturers allowed on the local market do not have a suitable model. The Clio, which is manufactured by Renault, the number-one car dealer in the country, borders on five horsepower, while its competitor, the 106 produced by the Peugeot group, is a four-horsepower vehicle, but only a few units are actually assembled. It would have been better to define Mr. Everyman's automobile on the basis of price.

The fact that the automobile importing system in effect since 1989 expired on 31 December 1993 has added to the confusion. From now on, importers will be selected according to a strict set of rules having little in common with the system in effect until now. But negotiations are behind schedule, and so far no firm has been officially approved. Meanwhile, the list of candidates interested in the "people's car" is growing steadily longer. So is the list of unhappy people. President Ben Ali's Operation "Charm" is misfiring.

*Objectives Cited for Nuclear Program

95AF0050C Paris JEUNE AFRIQUE in French 15 Feb 95 p 10

[Article by Ridha Kefi: "Tomorrow Nuclear Power"]

[FBIS Translated Text] Tunisia expects to have a nuclear research reactor with 1 or 2 megawatts of power by the year 2000. Studies are underway, and the relevant contacts with the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) are at an advanced stage, according to official information obtained in Tunis.

A member of the IAEA since the latter was established in 1958 and a signatory to the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty (NPF) and the International Convention on Nuclear Safety, Tunisia is also linked to the IAEA by a "guarantee accord."

That accord, signed in 1989, allows the Vienna agency to conduct any inspections it considers necessary at the country's nuclear facilities. The Tunisian Electricity and Gas Company (STEG) has in fact begun studies aimed at building a nuclear power plant.

"But we are not there yet," says one government source. "The new project itself is concerned with a small, very low-powered reactor that would provide researchers, who are currently scattered among various laboratories, with a suitable work setting and high-performance equipment. So far there has been no official contact with anyone, and the call for bids has not been issued.

"An expert at the IAEA will soon visit Tunis to help our experts decide on the size of the reactor and its equipment. He is also supposed to give an opinion on the proper location." That site will be in the vicinity of Tunis. Studies will be completed in 1996, and the reactor should be operational in 1999.

This interest in atomic research is not new. Tunisia has had many experts in the field since the 1970s, and it has already implemented many nuclear applications in areas as varied at health, industry, environment, and agriculture. But not until 1991 was the National Atomic Energy Commission set up and the National Center for Nuclear Science and Technology established.

"Our objectives are purely economic and social," the same source added so as to dispel any misunderstanding about the peaceful nature of the project at a time when the problem of the proliferation of nuclear weapons is a topic of discussion.

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Kuwait

Foreign Minister Interviewed on Europe Tour, Iraq

JN0203095195 London AL-HAYAH in Arabic 26 Feb 95 p 6

[Interview with Shaykh Sabah al-Ahmad al-Sabah, deputy prime minister and foreign minister, by unidentified correspondent in London "at the end of his official visit to the United Kingdom"]

[FBIS Translated Text] [Correspondent] What are the results of your European tour?

[Al-Sabah] During this tour, I visited five European countries, including two new members of the Security Council—Italy and Japan—as well as the Czech Republic to praise its stands and to thank President Vaclav Havel, on behalf of the amir, for his stands. As you know, President Havel paid an official visit to Kuwait and was received by his highness the amir. We cannot forget his stand, particularly his speech at the United Nations. I wanted to know the views of the new members of the Security Council. I found that these countries support our views regarding the issue of lifting sanctions. The Security Council members should pressure Iraq to implement the related Security Council resolutions, particularly with regard to the prisoners and those held as hostages, the return of Kuwaiti property, particularly military property, and the removal of nonconventional weapons in Iraq. We are very interested in this, and we helped the UN fund in this respect. We hope such weapons will not be only removed from Iraq, but from all regional states, including Iran.

I found in my tour full support. I visited France at a critical time for them, at the time of elections and with the existence of differences and competition between the officials there. However, they frankly expressed their views vis-a-vis the sanctions. They might differ with the Americans on this issue in terms of tactics, however, they do not differ in terms of essence. They fully support the call on Iraq to implement all related Security Council resolutions. Even if the report of UN envoy Rolf Ekeus has some positive points, Iraq must be closely monitored so it will not violate any of the points agreed upon.

In brief, the visit, which I considered a success, gave me an idea about the stands of these countries. I am not speaking about the British stand, which is as resolute as the American stand. The visit was an opportunity for consultations and exchanging opinions about the stands of the countries I visited.

[Correspondent] Your answer has paved the road for two questions: Do you expect a surprise at the Security Council in March and has Russia informed you of its endeavor regarding the Kuwaiti prisoners?

[Al-Sabah] I do not expect a surprise when the Security Council holds a meeting in mid-March, knowing that Ekeus' report will be an oral one. In April, however, differences might surface not on the essence, but on when the sanctions will be lifted and for how many months Iraq must be tested. Some members want to define the number of months during which Iraq will be tested and to know whether the prisoners are dead or alive. God willing, they are still alive.

[Correspondent] What about Russia and the issue of prisoners?

[Al-Sabah] I would like to record my appreciation for the Russian Federation, because it contributed to Resolution 833 and showed interest in the issue of prisoners. Contacts are underway with Russian officials who sent envoys to Iraq to meet with the national committee for prisoners and carried complete files about them. In fact, they are very interested in the issue and have information about the prisoners. Although the information is old, they believe they can be of benefit to us when they complete their contacts.

[Correspondent] Would you tell us about the difficulty in dealing with Iraq and the suffering of the Iraqi people while Saddam Husayn is still in power? Is it correct that Kuwait supports an Iraqi military opposition faction?

[Al-Sabah] Some people say that Kuwait supports a specific Iraqi opposition faction. We do not support any Iraqi opposition faction, inasmuch as we support all Iraqis outside Iraq. The support is not in the form of weapons or money, but in the form of medicine and food. This is not new, and a fund will be announced under the supervision of the [Kuwaiti] Red Crescent to donate humanitarian aid.

[Correspondent] What about the military aid?

[Al-Sabah] I would like to say that we avoid this. We deal with the Iraqi opposition on the political, not military, level.

[Correspondent] Are you worried about relations between Saddam Husayn's Iraq and Iran and Turkey?

[Al-Sabah] We can say there is Iraqi-Iranian cooperation, but, Iran and the Iranians do not trust the present regime in Iraq. If there are relations, such relations deal only with smuggling or selling oil, as we hear. These relations show the lack of trust between the Iraqi regime and Iran.

[Correspondent] What about Turkey?

[Al-Sabah] Relations with Iran and Turkey are based on interests. Turkey has interests with us, as well as with Iraq. Some people want to smuggle money outside Iraq and others want to bring oil from Iraq in trucks, not pipes. We pay Turkey $250 million each year as compensation for stopping the flow of oil from Iraq. The value of the four-year agreement is $1 billion, and the last payment was paid two months ago.

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[Correspondent] Last year, you toured the Arab Maghreb countries to normalize relations with these countries. Do you plan other visits to the so-called hostile states?

[Al-Sabah] I am happy about restoring our relations with these countries. In fact, our relations were not bad. Our embassies in these countries were not closed, but remained open in Tunisia, Mauritania, and Algeria. The embassies were not closed, but there were reactions from Kuwaitis to the acts of some institutions in Tunisia, Algeria, and Mauritania. However, these reactions were transient. My visit removed the misunderstanding and relations returned to normal.

[Correspondent] Jordan and Yemen were considered hostile states. Is there a plan to contact these countries?

[Al-Sabah] Regarding Yemen, we have not started anything. We have a charge d'affaires at our embassy there. Yemen, regrettably, leveled many accusations against us. They asked to send an envoy to inspect their embassy in Kuwait. We said they are welcome and we have no objection to this.

Regarding Jordan, our embassy is still open in Amman and an envoy came from the Jordanian Foreign Ministry and I received him in Kuwait. However, we need time to remove the misunderstanding between Kuwait and Jordan. We really hope someone in Jordan will say that Jordan supports the Security Council resolutions. We do not ask for an apology or for anything else, but we want Jordan to support the resolutions issued by the international legitimacy and to announce that it supports the implementation of these resolutions.

[Correspondent] Kuwait still vetoes any efforts by the Arab League to clear the Arab atmosphere and to prepare for an Arab summit. What is your stand on such a summit and when the veto will be lifted?

[Al-Sabah] Kuwait cannot veto the convening of a summit; they can hold a summit without Kuwait. The veto, however, comes from many Arab countries, such as Sudan-Egypt relations, as well as other relations. Time has not come to convene a summit. First, we should be frank with each other and remove all obstacles so as to lay down a basis for a summit. Regrettably, I believe that the ground is inappropriate for holding a summit. We in Kuwait believe that before convening a summit the circumstances which produced this situation should end.

[Correspondent] Is Kuwait ready to receive Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhaq Rabin? Was any pressure exerted on you to receive him?

[Al-Sabah] We have not been asked to receive him. Even if we are asked, we will not receive him.

We regret the reports that military maneuvers are being conducted between eight Arab countries and Israel. I would like to deny this in part and parcel because Kuwait does not participate in such maneuvers. It was not even informed of them. Regarding the boycott of Israel, there is a kind of pressure regarding the Kuwaiti boycott of Israel. We lifted the secondary and tertiary boycott willingly, because we needed the American, British, and Japanese companies working in Israel. However, the primary boycott will only be lifted in accordance with a decision by the Arab League.

[Correspondent] Do you feel that there is a problem of religious extremism as witnessed by other members of the Gulf Cooperation Council [GCC]?

[Al-Sabah] Kuwait has not faced this problem. Praise be to God, the religious current in Kuwait has never thought of resorting to terrorism. It is a peaceful current, although it has been criticized by some Arab countries. We heard that Egypt accused some Islamic welfare institutions in Kuwait of sending money to banned groups in Egypt. We agreed to send representatives of these institutions to meet with President Mubarak to explain everything to him. The meeting was extremely positive and President Muabark asked them to extend their stay.

[Correspondent] Has Kuwait tried to mediate the border disputes between Gulf Cooperation Council states, such as the Bahraini-Qatari border dispute?

[Al-Sabah] Kuwait is not in a position to embark on mediation. However, we welcomed the mediation by King Fahd, the custodian of the two holy mosques. We also welcomed the Bahraini and Qatari welcome and acceptance of the Saudi mediation. We support the mediation of both the custodian of the two holy mosques and Saudi Arabia, and we hope the dispute will be successfully resolved.

Moreover, it was agreed at the Bahrain summit that the differences among the GCC states should be resolved within one year. However, the issue was not the Bahraini-Qatari dispute. I know someone will reply to me by saying that some reservations were made about the fact that this dispute does not fall within the framework of reconciliation or the resolution of differences. We, however, would like to resolve any differences among ourselves without introducing any foreign party to resolve them.

[Correspondent] Is there anything new on the Kuwaiti position regarding the United Arab Emirates [UAE] islands which are occupied by Iran?

[Al-Sabah] Kuwait is part of the GCC, so anything harming any of the GCC states will also harm Kuwait. However, our relationship with Iran is good, and so is the UAE-Iranian relationship, apart from their dispute over these islands. We are trying to make Iran understand the situation. Many differences cannot be resolved by threats. We hope our differences will not be resolved by force. We should learn a lesson from what happened to Iraq. I hope both sides, particularly Iran, will understand the UAE situation and resolve the problems by peaceful means and agree on going to the International

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Court of Justice, or to directly and unconditionally meet with our brothers in the UAE.

[Correspondent] What about the consultations between you and Saudi Arabia on promoting the bilateral relationship at the level of the government and institutions?

[Al-Sabah] The Kuwaiti-Saudi relationship is no different than the relationship between any two Arab states. Our relations are good and will be promoted. I would like to say that our relations with Saudi Arabia are those of fraternity, love, and good neighborliness, and they will be promoted in the future.

[Correspondent] This is a domestic question: Do you expect an economic crisis in Kuwait in view of the debt issue? Are you personally satisfied with Kuwait's economic situation?

[Al-Sabah] With regard to debts, there is the possibility of holding consultations on passing laws acceptable to both the [Kuwaiti National] Assembly and the government. Regarding the economic situation, I am not pessimistic because it is sound, praise be to God. We, however, have a financial deficit, which also happens in other states and should not frighten us. There could be reactions to the fees and taxes issue, but I am sure these reactions will end and that our Kuwaiti people will accept these fees and taxes. This is because Kuwait's interest requires the people to endure the fees; they will not harm the majority of citizens because we divided the fees on electricity and water into categories.

[Correspondent] There is a campaign against Higher Education Minister Dr. Ahmad al-Ruba'i. What is your position on it?

[Al-Sabah] I regret this campaign because Dr. al-Ruba'i was not involved. Regrettably, personal differences in our country are above anything else. I hope this situation ends peacefully and that al-Ruba'i remains in office.

[Correspondent] Thanks to your support?

[Al-Sabah] Thanks to his efforts in the higher education field. He will continue his work, God willing.

[Correspondent] What is your assessment of the Palestinian situation and the presence of Abu-'Ammar [Yasir 'Arafat] in Gaza? Do you believe the [Palestinian] National Authority will eventually lead to a Palestinian state?

[Al-Sabah] Regardless of our differences with the PLO, I wish the Palestinian people well, and we support their demands. I heard that the Palestinians are demanding that a summit be held in view of the crisis between them and Israel. I wonder: When the Palestinians and Israel agreed on peace, why did they not notify the Arab states? The Palestinians made peace out of their own wish. Now, however, there is a crisis. I believe the Palestinians should assume responsibility and that the PLO officials should take the responsibility.

[Correspondent] Are you optimistic about the future Palestinian situation?

[Al-Sabah] I am neither optimistic nor pessimistic. I regret both this situation and the differences among the Palestinians, such as what happened at the Cairo meeting, where many of their colleagues did not show up. However, I wish the Palestinian people well.

Saudi Arabia

CDLR Bulletin No. 36 on Saudi Events Issued

MS0103150395 London CDLR MONITOR in English 24 Feb 95

[Bulletin No. 36 of the Committee for the Defense of Legitimate Rights of Saudi Arabia (CDLR); issued on 24 February—received by fax 28 February]

[FBIS Transcribed Text]

Your Right to Know

The Communique about Vigil and Protest: Legitimisation...

Responses are still arriving with regard to the "sit-in" protest scheduled to take place in both King Al-Sa'ud Fahd Bin-'Abd-al'Aziz mosque in Riyadh and Shaykh Safar Al-Hawaly mosque in Jeddah. With all due respect to our brothers in Qasim regarding the designation of a mosque for a protest in Buraydah, we would appeal to them to participate in the protest in Riyadh and in the future another event will be arranged in Buraydah and possible other locations such as Ha'il, Sakakah, Abha and the eastern region for our brothers in those regions. We would like to confirm once again, that all effort on this occasion should be focused on Jeddah and Riyadh. We would like to emphasise that the required procedure for participation is to gather silently and peacefully after the Friday prayer to recite Koran, make Du'a' and to show the highest degree of self control as was shown during the Buraydah crisis.

Some of our brothers are questioning the legitimate foundation of such actions and we, without a doubt, greatly respect our brothers conscientiousness in searching for the truth in order to avoid committing illegitimate actions. We would like to state the our policy is based on the legitimacy of the end and the means, and there is no place for the statement "the end justifies the means". We would say, with the help of Allah (Blessed be His Names), that the fundamental issue in all collective duties is that the command is directed to the whole nation. Therefore, it is a command for the whole group and not the individual, and if one person or a group of people executed that command, they are only doing it in representation of the Nation. The message in the Shari'ah, in those cases, was directed to the group. Allah (Blessed Be His Names) said: "Let there arise out of you a band of people inviting to all that is good enjoining all that is right and forbidding what is wrong. They are the

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ones to attain felicity." Allah (Blessed Be His Names), also said: "Ye are the best of people evolved for mankind: enjoining all that is right and forbidding what is wrong." With regard to the children of Israel, Allah (Blessed Be His Names) said that in the Sabbath event, "When some of them said," why do you preach.....". This is one of the bases.

The second base is that the co-operation on righteousness and piety is a constant legitimate foundation. Allah said: "help ye one another in righteousness and piety, but help ye not one another in sin and in rancour." To Musa (PBUH) [Peace Be Upon Him], Allah (Blessed Be His Names) said: "We will certainly strengthen thy arm through thy brother...." which emphasises the preachers need for support from others.

The third base is that the condemnation of wrong doing is an undeviating legitimate duty and ignoring it leads to ruin in this life and punishment in the after-life.

Without a doubt, the imprisonment of the preachers and reformers and the propaganda to discredit and dishonour them is a despicable action that must be condemned. Such legitimate duty must be carried out with all rightful means for the fillfilment of Allah's commands. As long as it is most likely that an activity is believed to be an effective method of condemning such despicable actions and as long as the means of achieving the action are in themselves legitimate, then we believe that this action we are about to proceed with fillfils our duty towards Allah (Blessed Be His Names) and for whomever is interested in achieving the same.

However, meeting at the mosque was a normal event in the time of the Prophet (PBUH) and his Companions, as it was proved that whenever there was an emergency, the Prophet (PBUH) would call people to the mosque to meet and discuss the problem. That trend continued during the time of e Companions. The scholars of Islam did accomplish this as they established groups of people for the purpose of preaching, condemning and removing wrong actions.

The Companion, Hisham Bin- Hakeem Bin Hizaam, used to travel with a group of companions to preach about the benefits of good actions and to condemn bad actions. Also, 'Umar Bin-al-Khattab, when he heard that something sinful was about to occur or be carried out, would say: "This will never take place as long as I and Hisham bin Hakeem, are alive." Therefore, the scholar Ibn-Taymiyyah never hesitated in calling his students and followers to go to prison to release Shaykh Hafiz al-Mizzi by force, without the permission of the Sultan, who had imprisoned Shaykh Al-Mezzi unjustly. Thus, the gathering of people to listen to speeches and lectures, or to protest against injustice is indeed legitimate as long as it is for a valid, legitimate reason and is not accompanied by actions that would not be acceptable under Islamic law.

It would not be at all surprising if a shower of fatwas by the King's official scholars are issued in order to discredit the legitimacy of such actions. Their evidence is expected to be: "the permission of the leadership." The ones who will be issuing these fatwas are the ones who gave fatwa for the deployment of half a million foreign soldiers on our land and the same ones who claimed that criticism and advice to the leaders can only take place in secrecy. They are the ones who accuse people of the insincerity of their intentions and they rejected the correct evidence from Koran and Sunnah by stating that it is forbidden to co-operate on lifting injustice and oppression on the Nation. They are the same ones who appealed to the "leadership" to protect thee Nation from the "dangers" of Shaykhs Salman and Safar. We believe that the Nation has learned to discern between the legitimate actions supported by valid evidence and the statements of the King's scholars, who are specialised in finding excuses for all actions taken by the royal family.

We would like to repeat again that such a protest will go some way to absorbing the anger and energy of our youth and will prevent them from resorting to violence. Opposing such activity by claiming that it will lead to confrontation is illogical because what leads to confrontation is absolute negativity.

Know Your Leaders: No 1 in a Series....

We promised our readers with a series called "Know Your Leaders", in which we will be mainly investigating the four major political figures in the Kingdom and the ones responsible for most of the corruption and disasters suffered by the Nation and the whole Islamic world:- Fahd, Sultan, Salman and Nayif.

Despite the fact that there is plenty to say about King Fahd and the fact that most of the disasters presently suffered by the Nation are a direct consequence of his rule, the main discussion regarding the King would be dealine with the past. This is simply because the King is physically, mentally and psychologically in a very bad shape.

The ones who are presently "leading" the leader are composed into two groups.

The first group consist of the children of Abdul-Aziz, led by Sultan and Salman. The second group consists of Al Ibrahim, the in- laws of the King and uncles of Abdul-Aziz bin Fahd. It would seem that the two groups have come to a fair agreement, as Sultan and Salman take care of the state's affairs, in the Name of King Fahd, whilst Al Ibrahim take care of Fahd's money and his personal affairs. Their last achievement was the registering of all the King's properties in the name of his son "little" Abdul-Aziz.

The King is a figure with no mind and no real power. He spends most of his time "day-dreaming" due to lack of concentration and lack of clarity of thought. When he occasionally "awakes", he makes a few incoherent and disjointed statements, while Sultan and Salman will then do the necessary editing before announcing anything the King said to the public.

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So the discussion about the King will, for the time being, be postponed to a later date when we have a chance to analyse his life and policies with greater scrutiny and then possibly publish our findings in the magazine.

Despite Nayif's tyranny and his position as Interior Minister, he is finished politically. On one hand he suffers from drug abuse, as has been proved in various reports from Western sources. On the other hand he personally suffers from a severe psychological problem both inside and outside the family regarding the scandals related to his wife.

Nayif is also the subject of heavy criticism from the royal family due to his poor performance at the Interior Ministry and his abject failure to control both the activities of the reformers and the vast circulation of audio cassettes and written publications, as well as the spiralling crime rate.

We have learnt from observant sources that some of Nayif's authority has already been withdrawn as a result of the above.

Most observers would agree on the fact that the role of Nayif in the internal and external family decisions has become very limited, and would also agree that Nayif's mental capacity and intelligence are very limited, which does not qualify him to participate in important decisions at State level.

Nayif has tried to cover his inadequacies by using tyranny and oppression, as explained in previous bulletins. He is severely jealous of Salman, who, although occupying a nominally lower position and is younger than Nayif, nevertheless possesses more intelligence with a greater ability for public speaking and debating, as well as carrying more weight within the family.

Nayif has all but disappeared recently due to all of these problems and he feels psychological defeated wherever he goes, even in his office or his car, as he has seen slogans, on his office wall and even found a copy of the CDLR Monitor that described his wife's scandals in his car! He reacted to this with intense anger and randomly threw his guards in prison.

Therefore, any discussion in detail regarding Nayif is not really a paramount requirerment at this stage as he is considered to be finished, or at least severely handicapped.

We then find ourselves resorting to discussions about the two devils who have filled the land with deceit and corruption and brought the country to the brink of ruination. Their evil has spread throughout the whole peninsula, the Islamic world and even the world at large.

The discussion about Sultan regards his belief that the reformers are against him personally, whilst the discussion about Salman is with regard to how he managed to convince the well-intentioned people that he is the man for change and debate, whereas the truth is that of all of the Aal-Sa'ud, he is the one who has been most persistent in his opposition to the reformers and uses exceptional but obvious cunning in his attempts to discredit them.

While Sultan receives the files of Yemen, Iraq, Iran the army , and the intelligence department, Salman receives the files on the scholars, the economy, Israel, Europe, America and the foreign media and has a free hand in all these issues.

We will expose the reality of these two men in future bulletins and we will discuss this subject further in our magazine.

NEWS Mobile Phone Farce....

There is no need for us to say that the mobile phone project makes light of the people's intelligence.

According to our sources, the farcical mobile phone project has become the topic of the moment amongst the people. Everyone in the Kingdom knows that mobile phones have become an accepted part of everyday life in the majority of countries, including poorer countries such as Yemen and Pakistan, who have been able to provide such a service for a number of years now. In Europe and America, mobile phones are carried by a large section of the population.

In the Kingdom, rental fees of 10,000 riyals were presented to the people, while at the same time in Europe, rental fees did not exceed 200 riyals, in The Emirates the fees were a few hundred riyals, whilst in Jordan fees were 500 riyals.

In Europe and the Gulf countries the customer receives the service immediately whilst Saudi customers must pay 10,000 riyals in advance and then wait indefinitely until al-Sa'ud see fit to allow the service to proceed.

Throughout the world companies compete for the business and custom of the consumers, while in Saudi Arabia Muhammad bin Fahd monopolises the service.

One of the most peculiar aspects regarding is project was to do with the registration for phones which began at 10 a.m. After 10 minutes a waiting list was started requesting payment in advance and an indefinte wait for the service. To date, only a tenth of the expected number of applicants have actually registered. The expected number of customers was one million, with only 125,000 people so far registering which is less than the number of free lines given to the Kingdom by AT&T company as a present for granting them the four billion dollar project.

The Committee has learned that the poor response to the project was intentional on the part of the people, mainly as a form of boycott. Many people were unsure of the legitimacy in giving money in advance for an indefinite period of time, knowing that in the meantime their money would be invested in the banks at full interest. Some scholars have warned about such actions.

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Meetings were arranged by the telecommunications management to study the consequences of the great loss resulting from the people's lack of response to the service.

The Committee welcomes this boycott by the people and calls upon them to register for mobile phones in neighbouring countries which cover the Kingdom.

Safety in Riyadh...

Dissatisfaction amongst the people has greatly increased regarding the continued decline of security in the country. The authorities are still attempting to cover up the reality of the situation with lies and fabrications in the official press and other media.

The following is just an example of only a few of the reported crimes during one night in Riyadh on the night of the 20th of Ramadan:- 31 cars stolen, 3 stabbings, 6 shootings, 3 cases of theft and 2 armed robberies.

The Detention Campaign...

The reports transferred to the King by Nayif, to convince him that the Committee is totally dependant on certain personalities were actually master-minded by an anti-Islamic personality who has a distinguished position in the Interior Ministry.

This person has cunningly managed to fool and mislead al-Sa'ud into taking revenge against the reformers and preachers with their own hands.

The fools of al-Sa'ud are still implementing this man's recommendations, despite the fact that events have proved the independence of the Committee.

On the other hand the arrests still continue and in Al-Jawf area Mr Muhammad Misbah al-'Utaybi was arrested and removed to an unknown destination, while in Ha'il city, Mr 'Ayid Muqbil al-Shammari was also arrested.

Faysal bin Fahd Distressed...

It has become evident that the real reason behind the disappearance of Faysal bin Fahd for a few months, was his anger towards his father's actions when he requested that all his property should eventually go to "Darling" Abdul-Aziz.

This angered Faysal and all his full brothers, Muhammad and Saud and also coincided with the illness of his mother, who left for America and is under medication and care for six months. Faysal took this opportunity to accompany his mother, and he and his brothers regulary meet there.

The Farmers and Diesel....

Petromin Company has requested help as the demand for diesel fuel has decreased to 60 per cent. This was sent by telegram to the King. The problem has occurred because farmers have reduced their consumption of diesel fuel by two thirds in comparison to previous years.

Yemen

Salih Gives 'Id Address, Views Memo With Saudi Arabia

JN0103202695 Sanaa Yemeni Republic Radio Network in Arabic 1700 GMT 1 Mar 95

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] President Lieutenant General 'Ali 'Abdallah Salih has addressed the sons of the Yemeni people inside and outside the homeland on the occasion of the blessed 'Id al-Fitr. The following is the text of the address:

In the name of God, the merciful, the compassionate. Praise be to God, and peace and blessings be upon His prophet. Dear citizens throughout the homeland and wherever you may be. It pleases me to extend to you and to all the sons of our Arab and Islamic nation heartfelt congratulations on the advent of the blessed 'Id al-Fitr. [passage omitted]

We stress the need for the government to assume its responsibility in full, and without any hesitation, to tackle the economic situation, improve the citizens' living standards, work to control and increase revenues, rationalize spending, redress disorders in the economic field, and fight all forms of financial, administration, economic, and commercial corruption in accordance with what it has emphasized in its program, or, otherwise, it should be held responsible before the House of Representatives.

Brother citizens: Building the homeland and achieving progress and prosperity is the responsibility of all sides regardless of their positions, political approaches, or ideologies. This necessitates that we should give faith, commitment, spirit, and content to national action. We should also adhere decisively and principally to the option of democratic pluralism as the only option for development, change, and the sharing of responsibility. This is also the right of the opposition. This right should be employed to serve and protect the principles and national gains through free competition and in accordance with set programs in order to build the edifices of the new life in the one free homeland. Everyone, inside or outside the government, is required, more than at any time in the past, to be sincere and to assume his national responsibilities, especially since the battle of safeguarding the victory of unity and democracy, continuing development, and confronting challenges require a great, decisive, and generous popular cohesion throughout the homeland. [passage omitted]

Although we pay special attention to internal issues, these issues will continue to be linked to the issues and aspirations within the regional, pan-Arab, and international framework. This is why we pay greater attention to the intimate fraternal relations with all our brothers. We

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emphasize our declared policy of adhering to peace, dialogue, and peaceful negotiations as the best means to settle differences among the brothers, and to always work to avert the woes of wars and destruction from the sons of the one Arab nation. Based on this, we have continued our brotherly meetings with the brothers in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. In order to resolve the border problem between the two countries on the basis of no victor or vanquished party, through fraternal dialogue and understanding, and as one of the fruits of all the good efforts which were exerted between our country and the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, praise be to God, a memorandum of understanding between them was signed in Mecca, which includes the bases and principles in accordance with which negotiations will be held to end the border problem between the two fraternal countries. With all confidence, we hope that the signing of this memorandum will mark the opening of a new era of fruitful joint action and a fruitful and constructive step toward preparing a better atmosphere to resolve all the issues of interest of both countries and to entrench new and strong bases to develop and promote fraternal relations based on brotherhood, amity, respect, cooperation, and good neighborliness in the interest of the two brotherly and neighboring peoples and their prosperity, and in order to entrench security, stability, and peace in the region.

We stress the Republic of Yemen's concern about resuming the sincere fraternal dialogue with the brothers in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia to achieve the aspired objectives of the two fraternal peoples who are linked by strong ties of brotherhood, amity, kinship, and neighborliness. We believe that resorting to reason and adhering to the possibility of the success of the responsible and serious dialogue will enable the two countries to arrive at the result which will be satisfactory, fair, and just for each of them, God willing.

We believe that what has been reached through sincere fraternal dialogue constitutes a good example in the march of inter-Arab relations. It is also a gain, not only for the two fraternal countries, but to the Arab nation, joint Arab action, and Arab solidarity which was regrettably affected by the differences among the brothers. We look forward, with all confidence, to seeing that what has been reached between our country and the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia mark the beginning of restoring Arab solidarity on sound and strong bases to achieve the Arab nation's hopes, aspirations, and objectives.

Brothers: Undoubtedly, inasmuch we are interested in the future of our homeland and the future of the region around us, from the same premise, we pay attention to the future of our Arab and Islamic nation. We stress our firm concern about supporting all efforts to achieve accord and to restore Arab and Islamic solidarity, out of our faith that our Arab and Islamic nation will have no clear future outside the framework of solidarity and without settling differences among the Arab and Islamic states. An appropriate solidarity which befits this nation cannot be achieved without tackling the problems which have obstructed the achievement of this solidarity. These problems constitute the cause of the current differences and fragmentation, and the fluctuating tactical policies at the expense of higher interests, values, Arab and Islamic morals, and the just fateful issues. [passage omitted]

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KDP Official Visits Victims of Zakho Explosion

JN0103211695 (Clandestine) Voice of Iraqi Kurdistan in Arabic 1745 GMT 1 Mar 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Brother (Nashirwan Barzani), our party's [Kurdistan Democratic Party, KDP] Political Bureau member, visited Zakho on the morning of 28 February to offer condolences for the martyrs of the 27 February massacre which was carried out by the leaders of 66 [qadat sittah wa sittin].

At the outset of the visit, his excellency, accompanied by brothers (Munzi Sha'ban) and Shawkat Shaykh Yasin, Central Committee members, and the members of the active commission of our party's first branch, visited the tombs of the martyrs of the reprehensible crime which was carried out by the Jalalists. He offered condolences on behalf of the brother leader of our party and the political bureau to the masses that gathered near the tombs of the martyrs, and to the families of the martyrs. He then participated in the central condolences ceremony at the Zakho mosque that was attended by representatives of the Iraqi National Congress.

His excellency delivered a valuable speech to the audience on behalf of the brother leader of our party. He then visited the site where the incident took place.

Afterward, his excellency attended a meeting of the Zakho district office and the city's security committee. He made proposals and recommendations and stressed our party's solidarity with the officials in Zakho. He visited the (urdu) voluntary society and met with the brother officials of the Zakho local committee. The discussion during the meeting dealt with the abhorrent crime that was committed by the agents of 66 in addition to the human and material losses sustained by the citizens.

On the evening of the same day, his excellency visited those who were wounded in the incident in the Dahuk Governorate and asked about the patients. He stressed that this ugly crime against our people cannot pass unpunished.

Opposition Reports Attack on Government Construction Site

NC0103172795 (Clandestine) Voice of Iraqi Islamic Revolution in Arabic 1430 GMT 1 Mar 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Placing its trust in God, a group of our heroic mujahidin carried out a daring attack on an engineering project in al-Fuhud District of al-Nasiriyah [Dhi Qar] Governorate on 1 February.

Our mujahidin controlled the site completely for three hours. The enemy's losses were as follows: 51 dump trucks, 17 bulldozers, 10 pickup trucks, 10 graders, and one water transporting truck were set on fire; seven armored vehicles and one large machine gun were destroyed; one ammunition dump and four tents were burned; and four mercenaries were killed.

Our heroic group returned safely to base after the operation.

Government Forces Attack Kurdish Safe Haven

LD0103175195 London Iraqi Broadcasting Corporation Press Release in English 1 Mar 95

[Received by fax]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Salhuddin, Iraq (1 March)—Iraqi National Congress [INC] sources in Salhuddin today confirmed that Iraqi tanks, massing on the edge of the Kurdish safe haven since 27 February, began shelling the town of Kifri last night. No reports of casualties have been received.

The tanks, which number about 30, compromise only part of a large Iraqi troop movement into the area, the full scale of which is not yet known. Over the last few days the official Baghdad press has been urging intervention in northern Iraq.

Aziz Ailyan, member of the INC Executive Council said: "The prospect of UN sanctions being eased and the current unrest in Iraqi Kurdistan have bolstered Saddam. The international community should send a strong message to Saddam that a full-scale attack on Iraqi Kurdistan will not be tolerated."

Kifri, about 60 miles southeast of Kirkuk, lies on the line between liberated Iraqi Kurdistan and the area under Saddam's control.

Kurdish Fighting Flares in al-Sulaymaniyah

JN0203100395 Baghdad AL-JUMHURIYAH in Arabic 25 Feb 95 p 1

[Report by Azad Nah Riman in al-Sulaymaniyah—all Kurdish names as published]

[FBIS Translated Text] Some 237 gunmen loyal to Jalal Talabani have been killed in three attacks against positions controlled by gunmen loyal to [Mas'ud] Barzani in the ares of Kasnazan, Banjwin, and Jabal Safin in the past two days.

Pro-Talabani gunmen, led by Nushirwan Mustafa, Talabani's deputy, attacked the Kasnazan area starting from the east Irbil axis. They also attacked Kusirt Rasul, a town on the Kou Senjaq road, 15 km from Irbil, starting from a western axis. In the bloody battle, which lasted five hours, 75 pro-Talabani gunmen were killed and 108 others were wounded. Pro-Barzani gunmen, led by Jamal Bunjinah, held captive 15 pro-Talabani gunmen.

Among the dead pro-Talabani gunmen were military officials, including the following regiment commanders: Nuri Qadir Balarikah, Razkar Bisu, Sardar Wasman, Bakzad Sawarah, and Butan Sa'id.

Meanwhile, another pro-Talabani force attacked the headquarters and bases of pro-Barzani gunmen in the Banjwin area in the al- Sulaymaniyah governorate, and

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occupied the Kilah heights and nearby villages in the Nazara area. In this battle, which lasted seven hours, pro-Talabani gunmen controlled the Banjwin bridge. However, 54 of them were killed, including Najat Rafiq 'Ali, commander of the special regiment in al-Sulaymaniyah, and his assistant Jalal 'Uthman Rashid. Pro-Talabani gunmen also attacked the strategic position of Jabal Safin which overlooks the areas of Harir, Shaqlawah, Bataf, Klaw Qasim, and Balisan as well as Irbil city itself.

Kurds Urged To Respond to Initiative

JN2702072595 Baghdad AL-THAWRAH in Arabic 15 Feb 95 p 3

[Article by Diya' Hasan on Iraq's appeal for end to bloodshed in northern Iraq: "A Wise National Initiative Awaiting a Mature, Responsible Response"]

[FBIS Translated Text] After four years of alienation by the Kurdish groups in the northern part of the homeland, the hand which seeks the wellbeing of the homeland is again extended in order to let bygones be bygones, end the bloodshed which has engulfed all Kurds due to the current fighting in the region, and open the way for continuing the 1991 dialogue during which a new agreement was reached between the Kurdish groups and the central authority with the view to developing the autonomy experiment, deepening the fraternity between the sons of the Arab and Kurdish nationalities, and entrenching national unity.

It is obvious that the Iraqi leadership's recent initiative is aimed at filling the vacuum resulting from the absence of the central national authority. This vacuum has been and will continue to be the cause of all the problems and internecine fighting, which the autonomous region has witnessed for a long time —escalating at times and subsiding at others—despite foreign claims that the region "is secure" under the protection of the U.S. forces. Recent and earlier incidents have proven that the continued presence of these forces in the northern part of the homeland under cover or justification is a factor of instability for the region and a means of provoking fighting between the Kurdish groups.

How do we understand the recent initiative? Is it a new initiative with a tactical aim, or a sincere attempt to spare Kurdish blood which is being spilled without any justification?!

If we are go back a little to 1991; or to be exact, to the period which followed the 30-state aggression and the containment of the chapter of treachery and treason, we will find that the positive national initiative which was sponsored by leader President Saddam Husayn at that time had indeed matured and opened, what the Kurds termed at that time, the difficult road to a direct dialogue between the representatives of the central authority and the Kurdish parties. As acknowledged by Mas'ud Barzani and Jalal Talabani, that dialogue resulted in what they termed positive results and an agreement which, according to the Kurdish groups, would lead to closing the doors before all foreign attempts to sabotage national unity.

At that time, and as desired by the leader president, the dialogue was not just confined to discussing the details of a new agreement for the autonomous regime—although this was one of his excellency's main concerns, being the one who authored the important 11 March 1970 Declaration and which acknowledged for the first time in the Middle East region the national and cultural rights of the Kurds within the framework of the unity of Iraq, people and territory—but also included a joint revision of a draft for the Iraqi constitution and the political parties law. The Kurdish negotiators represented the Front of Kurdish Parties and their delegation was headed alternately by Talabani in the middle of April of that year, and by Barzani on the 6 May of the same year when he spent 42 days in Baghdad as negotiator. According to AL-THAWRAH, Barzani achieved important results. He then left for the autonomous region in order to consult with "the brothers in the leadership of the Kurdish front." He and Talabani then returned to Baghdad at the head of a high-level delegation in order to sign the agreement.

I recall that in an interview I had with him in the Diyana region of Irbil, Barzani told me: "I had several meetings with my brothers in the leadership of the front, and we felt that it was an opportune moment to seek the opinion of as many people as possible in the region. Fortunately, and contrary to what is being said, more than 90 percent want the agreement, and this is a very splendid thing."

When Barzani and Talabani returned this time, they were accompanied by a big delegation. I met with Talabani in one of the guest houses in Baghdad and tried to open a similar dialogue with him. But he made an excuse, which I considered logical at the time, that it was agreed among the parties of the front to make Barzani their only spokesman. Still, I managed to obtain a statement which was brief but responsive to my question on the results of the dialogue, confirming that the results were positive. He added: "Despite their alienation, the Kurds will return to Baghdad. And even if they differed over the details of the dialogue, they will find the national solutions with President Saddam Husayn, because he is on their side."

The importance of the 1991 dialogue is that, as admitted by the Kurdish parties, it ended 20 years of bitter fighting and regrettable incidents and returned all the parties, which are concerned about the one homeland and the common rights of its citizens, to the correct path; namely, sitting at the negotiation table not as two conflicting sides, but as one team with the common responsibility of discussing the affairs of the homeland and determining the means to build this homeland. This was expressed in two separate interviews which AL-THAWRAH conducted with Barzani and Talabani in

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July 1991, when they made a point of affirming that what they proposed enjoyed the unanimous support of the Kurdish parties.

What happened afterward; that is following the consensus on the details of the new agreement to develop the autonomy; a consensus which came in harmony with the view of the leader and the [Iraqi] leadership that such a development should be geared toward achieving the objectives and principles enshrined in the immortal March 11 Declaration?

A quick return to what took place, will show us that Barzani and Talabani, who used the excuse about the need to consult on the agreement with "the allies in the foreign protection umbrella" before signing it and later informed the negotiation officials in Baghdad that the results of the consultation with the umbrella parties were positive and that the agreement would be signed soon, retracted suddenly. They made a tour of Turkey and several western capitals, including Washington, where they were influenced by foreign advice and so chose alienation, which dragged the region to the present state of imbalance, utter loss, and lack of security and stability.

I do now want to go into any details which might open up old wounds, especially since the leadership has always taught us to close those wounds and look for what brings the Iraqis together and create an atmosphere which will help overcome sensitivities and encourage logic and wisdom when considering the viewpoints of the others, even those who have harmed us and erred against us. Perhaps, the leader's previous initiative in breaking with the past, which witnessed 20 years of Iraqi bloodshed, is a glaring example of his desire to deprive the rancorous foreign forces of any opportunity to turn the autonomous region into an area of instability through which it might sabotage the unity of the homeland and undermine its sovereignty as has happened in the past and is happening now.

The recent initiative represents a farsighted and comprehensive view of the issues of the homeland and a desire to agree on the major and crucial objectives which strengthen the unity and sovereignty of the homeland, ensure the security and stability of all the people, and promote the means of prosperity and progress not just in the North, but in every part of the homeland wherever Iraqis reside. This is a fact which has been confirmed by the events of the past four year. It has also been confirmed by the error of wagering on the delusion of foreign protection which, in practice, has proved to be the opposite. The stability of the region has been, and will continue to be, dependent on Iraq's stability and unity. Kurdish rights can only be achieved and entrenched under unified Iraq. The Kurds presently understand that there is not a more sincere and patriotic leader than President Saddam Husayn, who established their national and cultural rights constitutionally and made their autonomy experiment legal under legislative laws. They also understand that what they got was not forced out by any specific circumstances or pressure or the result of appeasement, but expressed the humanitarian outlook of the party and its leader which is based on a sincere and firm conviction of the Kurdish people's claim to those rights in accordance with the equality in rights and duties enjoyed by all the sons this homeland under the state of awakening and development which Iraq has been witnessing since the outbreak of the glorious revolution.

The recent initiative is not a new development in the leadership's strategy, but part of the firm and responsible stand which the leadership has always pursued when dealing with both ordinary and extraordinary conditions in the region. The extraordinary has not prevented the leadership from taking the initiative of opening the doors anew in order to patch up differences. It has also not prevented it from taking the step which is dictated by its sense of national responsibility toward the regrettable fighting in the autonomous region, where an unlimited or rather a great number of our Kurdish sons have fallen victims. This has called for a central initiative to stop the bloodshed and to return to the dialogue which stopped without any justification due to insincere foreign advice. It is a step to return balance to the region and ensure the security of our sons in it so that they will be able to resume their normal life and restore the bonds of kinship, which must decide the form of relationship and partnership between the Iraqis, because it is more powerful than any temporary developments, so that all would place their trust in God and work as one man in order to carry out the tasks of rebuilding Iraq and strengthening its unity.

Such a major and important initiative should prompt all Kurdish parties and all Iraqi national forces to assume the responsibility of rising to the high significance of this initiative and try to work together in order to restore kinship and put behind them the bad years which were imposed on the region against the will of the people with all their negative effects on the entire homeland.

I do not believe that there is anyone in Iraq—from North to South, and East to West—who is not aware of the fact that national unity and Arab-Kurdish fraternity are targeted by foreign forces which have coveted Iraq and held grudges against its people throughout its national history, and that both Arabs and Kurds have shared the harm resulting from foreign hostilities and conspiratorial policies.

Everyone—and this is what I hope and expect—realizes that it is time we prevented those forces from tampering with Iraq's security, unity, and safety. The sense of national responsibility calls for canceling all anomalous conditions. It also calls upon the Kurdish groups to end the state of alienation, return to the bosom of the one homeland, and work seriously to make Iraq a world example for national fraternity, the search for knowledge and progress, and the devotion to build an independent homeland based on free will and the exercise of real

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democracy. The bitterness of the old days and the experiences of the past four years have proven that there can be no prosperity for the Kurds except under the canopy of their national unity which is protected by Iraqi will power rather than the wanton foreign influence.

No doubt, the recent initiative enjoys the appreciation of the broadest Iraq political and social circles. We are not far from the truth when we assert that this initiative represents the demand and ambition of all Iraqis, both Arabs and Kurds. The patriotism of any Iraqi party or quarter will be measured by its response to this initiative and its endeavor to interpret it into a tangible reality.

Dialogue is the inevitable course for those who want to develop the autonomy experiment and enable the Kurds to gain more of the national and cultural rights which were granted to them with the conviction and satisfaction of all Iraqis and the deep affection of President Saddam Husayn as he enshrined Iraqi humanitarian national rights in the immortal 11 March Declaration.

I still recall a saying which Kurds agree on and often repeat: "Whatever we want is with President Saddam Husayn, because he is always on our side." This is also the opinion of all Iraqis, who hope that it would be the basis, now and without any further hesitation or delay, for a move to close all doors and loopholes before any foreign attempts to sabotage our national unity. It should be a move by the whole of Iraq.

Groups Urged Against Giving In to 'U.S. Blackmail'

NC0103152795 Baghdad INA in Arabic 1425 GMT 1 Mar 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Baghdad, 1 Mar (INA)—The Iraqi Health Ministry has expressed readiness to receive those people hurt when a criminal car bomb exploded in Zakho the day before yesterday, leaving many dead or injured. An official ministry source told INA that this step is in line with President Saddam Husayn's concern to provide medical care to all Iraqi citizens. The source noted that the necessary equipment to evacuate the injured to the Health Ministry hospitals in Mosul has been arranged. He said that despite the shortage of life-saving medicine in the Mosul hospitals, some essential medicine has been provided. The source appealed to international organizations to offer aid to the Iraqi health establishments and not to give in to the U.S. blackmail seeking to maintain the blockade on the Iraqi people.

Official on U.S. Industrial Delegations' Visits

NC0203092695 Cairo MENA in Arabic 0840 GMT 2 Mar 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Baghdad, 2 Mar (MENA)—'Adnan al-Qudsi, head of the Iraqi Industries Union [IIU], has revealed that industrial delegations from U.S. companies have visited Iraq and held talks with IIU officials. But he did not mention the names of these companies or the dates of the visits. He just said the companies have had previous dealings with Iraq.

In a statement to be published in the 3 March issue of the Iraqi weekly ALIF BA', al-Qudsi said the U.S. companies have expressed readiness to work in Iraq despite U.S. Government opposition.

Al-Qudsi noted that contacts are under way with Italian and other Western companies to secure contracts for them in Iraq.

Delegations from Western companies visited Iraq last year. And delegations of British and Spanish businessmen also visited Baghdad last month to explore the Iraqi market and establish projects in Iraq once the embargo is lifted.

Patriotic Front Chief Comments on Albright Tour

JN0103170595 Baghdad Republic of Iraq Radio Network in Arabic 1130 GMT 1 Mar 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Comrade 'Abd-al-Ghani 'Abd-al-Ghafur, secretary general of the National Progressive and Patriotic Front [NPPF], has asserted that Albright's tour has clearly exposed the isolation and failure of the U.S. policy, which has tendencious anti-Iraq intentions aimed to undermine its quest for scientific and cultural renaissance under struggler President Saddam Husayn.

While presiding over a meeting of the NPPF, he added that Washington's decision to underline [UN Security Council] Resolutions 706 and 712 ahead of the periodic review to discuss a revocation of the unfair sanctions reveals the U.S. plots and failed attempts to continue its economic warfare against our people. This is because these two resolutions undermine national sovereignty, not to mention that international support for revoking the unfair sanctions at the UN Security Council has rendered them obsolete. Now, he maintained, serious consideration is being given to the implementation of Paragraph 22 of Resolution 687, which provides for revoking the Iraq sanctions.

The NPPF secretary general urged the parties making up the NPPF and our people's masses to expose the fresh conspiratorial U.S. ideas, which aim to perpetuate the unfair sanctions against great Iraq.

The conferees examined several political and organizational topics and ways to promote and activate the NPPF's work in the next phase.

Paper Says U.S. Wagering on Food Embargo

JN2502174795 Baghdad AL-THAWRAH in Arabic 13 Feb 95 p 3

[Article by Malik Mansur: "The Market, Prices, and Perplexing Questions"]

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[FBIS Translated Text] The situation in the local market and the successive price spirals, especially in basic foodstuffs, are raising a broad argument and diverse, perplexing questions which might not make it possible for whoever delves into their details to find answers convincing for people and acceptable under any logic, reality, or economic law.

There are questions concerning the market and prices that cannot find satisfactory and convincing answers for a broad base of consumers who have been adversely affected by the steady drop in the real value of their low incomes. Why do commodities disappear suddenly from the market and reappear later with new prices that have increased by 30-100 percent? Who determines market conditions and the rise in prices? What is the relationship between the dollar and the increase in the prices of agricultural and animal products? Where does the government stand? How much influence does it have on the market and prices?

In order to find objective, comprehensible, and convincing answers, we must first accept the fact that the influence and pressure to which our national economy is exposed due to the aggression and the continuation and repercussions of the blockade have created unusual complications and turned the market mechanism into a complex process governed by several internal and external factors, so that national security is now linked sensitively to the food security of the citizen. Thus the blockade of the Iraqis in their daily bread and food has become the remaining wager in the hand of the United States to achieve its political and economic aims.

However, all these complications and repercussions and the direct link between the economy, the market, and politics on the one hand and the national economic security and daily life of the citizens on the other do not constitute a big puzzle. Because, whoever knows and follows the main facts and the internal and external factors which influence the market can reach a correct understanding of the inflationary movement, whose sensational and disturbing chapters we are now witnessing due to their strong impact on our life from time to time.

The first step to a correct, comprehensible, and convincing answer to what is taking place around us begins with an accurate assessment and a thorough view of the impact of the blockade on our national economy, and its different effects on inflation, the market mechanism, and prices.

The general economic embargo imposed on our country from the beginning of 1990 has prevented the export of any Iraqi commodity outside our international borders, including crude oil and its by- products, sulfur, phosphates, dates, and such other commodities which are in excess of our local market's needs.

What does all that mean and what are its repercussions on our national economy, inflation, the market, and prices?

Through the suspension of crude oil exports, Iraq has been deprived of 90 percent of its general imports, which included a long list of basic goods, including foodstuffs, to make up for what could not be guaranteed by national production. It also included raw materials and capital goods for maintaining the operation of our national industry. This is in addition to other imports for the purposes of implementing development projects under the state general budget.

The state used oil revenues and other hard currency savings to import large quantities of wheat, rice, sugar, tea, vegetable oil, meats, eggs, and a whole list of commodities which constituted the core of people's daily life. Thus, the blockade had stopped the importation of all commodities which guaranteed the local market's consumer requirements and satisfied the citizens' needs.

As time passed, the country's resources have begun to diminish gradually and scarcity has spread to cover all commodities, both those which are obtained from abroad and those which are produced locally. Therefore, it is not strange for this scarcity to continue, especially now that we are in the fifth year of the blockade, at a higher rate than in the past four years.

And now, what are the inevitable results on our national economy due to the disruption of our foreign currency revenues and the continued scarcity of commodities and goods needed by the local market, especially commodities related to the life of the family, the citizen, and society?

Inflation and price spirals were the first dangerous disease to hit our national economy. When commodity supplies in the local market are less than demand and the purchasing power of the people, prices tend to rise at a rate which is usually close to the degree of difference between supply and demand. And, whenever there is a drop in commodity supplies, and the gap widens between supply and demand, prices also tend to rise quickly in big leaps. The increase in prices leads to a drop in the real value of the national currency.

Thus begins the race of the losers in which the first pole is the rise in prices and the second pole is the inflation of the currency. In such a race it becomes essential to increase the income of the individuals and families to enable them to secure their minimum essential needs of basic foodstuffs, which are continuing their upward trend.

But while we are reviewing the difficult reality and the suffering we are experiencing due to the blockade and the scarcity of all commodities, we must not underrate the confusion and imbalance caused by the high rate of inflation and steady price spirals which, at times, could weaken central control over the fine details of the mechanism which motivates the market and prices.

The scarcity in commodity supply at such a high rate under the blockade provides merchants, commission

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agents, and parasites with the opportunity to hoard and speculate. These people are motivated by the urge to get rich quickly by exploiting the new conditions and hardships facing our entire country and people.

We must point out one fact here: The United States and its evil supporters are trying through certain technical measures and political activities to hamper what maintains and renews the resistance and steadfastness of our people and country. They represent the other face of the blockade, the side that complements the acts of the enemies.

Let us now discuss the relationship between the dollar and the rise in the prices of agricultural and animal products. Many people ask: If the prices of commodities and materials imported from abroad with hard currency are affected by the exchange rate of the local currency against the dollar, what makes the prices of vegetables and fruits and other commodities produced locally go up as much or even more than the increase in the exchange rate?

These questions may sound logical at first. But when we view our economy as a single unit governed by one mechanism, we find that inflation and the attending price spirals do not spare a single commodity or product, whether imported or locally produced. For example, when there is a rise in the cost of agricultural capital goods, such as seeds, fertilizers, fodder, equipment, plastic covers, transportation, and other productive services, all this cost is added to the prices of agricultural products, making the profit margin rise match the rise in the rate of inflation.

This means the curve of the rise in prices begins with raw materials which are wholly or partly imported and ends with all commodities, without any exception.

We must pay careful attention to two facts: First, hostile foreign forces are plotting intensively and systematically to increase the exchange rate of the dinar against the dollar with the view to increasing the rate of inflation rapidly, and therefore raising prices. Second, the instability of prices enables certain classes of merchants, parasites, and speculators to exploit this situation arbitrarily by increasing their profit margin from time to time, until it reaches more than 100 percent.

At the same time, the existence of a chain of middlemen in the commodity trade results in a further rise in prices, since every middleman in this chain adds a certain percentage to the profit margin. In the end, the consumer is the party most affected by the prices. So, he turns to the state with confidence and hope, and this is the correct, sound, and legitimate attitude.

Having said all that, we must now attempt to answer people's questions concerning the role of the state. They ask: Why does it not quickly use the power of its influence and weight to control the inflation and the rise in prices and take deterrent measures against contraveners?

Under the pressure of suffering and the hardships of life which are increasing with the steady rise in inflation and prices, many people think the solution is direct and general intervention by the state to control prices and enforce a specific mechanism which would achieve a degree of stability in the market and reduce the suffering of the people, until the implementation of the final phase of the crossing to the bank of victory and safety and the boon spreads among all the sons of our struggling people.

Despite being legitimate, this idea does not agree in some of its details and practical aspects with the present reality. Within its general program and list of priorities in confronting the blockade, which is the last main link in the aggression, the state devotes all its capabilities, resources, and the power of influence to tackling the basic and substantive issues facing and to protecting our people along the following lines:

On the political side, the state assumes the responsibility of defending Iraq's sovereignty, independence, and territorial integrity and protecting its natural wealth. The assumption of this historical responsibility calls upon the leadership to devote continuous qualitative efforts by different ways and means. Sovereignty, independence, and free national will constitute the cornerstone and the main pillar for building our life in the present and the future.

Moreover, the state assumes greater responsibilities on the level of strengthening Iraq's political and diplomatic relations with the countries of the world and gaining international support for the right of Iraq and its people to remove the unjust blockade.

The state is also concerned about tackling the negative effects of the new anomalous situation by ensuring the security, safety, and stability of society.

On the economic side, the state intervenes with its weight and influence in a delicate manner by:

- Ensuring the continued application of the ration card which provides every Iraqi family a basket of foodstuffs and other goods as a means to maintain its livelihood.

- Increasing the salaries of civil servants whenever necessary to help then ensure their main purchases from the local market, in addition to what they get under the ration card, according to their pressing needs, which are restricted by the circumstances of the blockade.

- Ensuring the flow of foodstuffs and essential consumer goods through the central markets and cooperative societies at prices which are far below those of the local market.

- Assuming the responsibility for maintaining free health services for all citizens at fees which are symbolic compared to those charged by the private sector; ensuring the continuation of free education at all school levels from the kindergarten to higher institutions.

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- Providing public services at very low fees, such as electricity, water supply, fuel, all types of oil by-products, and telephone services. These are basic services which help the family manage its basic needs and organize its life easily.

Therefore, the state is present and devotes its entire weight, role, and power of influence to essential matters and fields which are necessary and basic to the life of the Iraqi family, within the available capabilities and resources.

But any direct involvement by the state in the details of the market mechanism and forcible control of the level of prices would lead to wasting a major part of its capabilities and resources, which are needed in tackling and organizing more important and priority issues linked to the vital interests of the country and the people. Besides, such direct interference in the details of the market mechanism could lead to the removal from the field of economic activity a broad class of Iraqis who are performing a positive role. It would also mean cutting off their legitimate and honest work. In the circumstances of the continued blockade, this is considered essential, beneficial, and fruitful and cannot be given up despite any loopholes.

In the circumstances of the blockade and the scarcity of commodities, we need every sincere additional capacity and effort complementing the measures and arrangements being assumed by the state and backing the work and efforts directed toward ensuring foodstuffs in the local market in order to enable the Iraqi family to secure part of its needs, in addition to what it gets through the ration card, while maintaining a high degree of rationalism and sound management, even at the current market prices.

And now, while our people are struggling with all their strength, resolution, and national will in order to pass through the final stage of the crossing to the bank of victory and safety, and when signs of a real breakthrough are looming on the near horizon; at this very time, the U.S. Administration and its evil supporters have resorted to a campaign of cheap lies and allegations in order to harm Iraq and create confusion with the view to influencing the steadfastness and resistance of our great people.

In their state of desperation, the enemies are wagering on their conspiratorial activities, especially those aimed at sabotaging our national economy. The scarcity of foodstuffs in the local market which has led to a quick rise in prices in big leaps is largely due to foreign action, which has been helped by opportunists who exploit people's food and tribulations. They are a small minority and the state will know how to deal with such cases through its wisdom, justice, and determination at the appropriate time.

Therefore, the enemies of our country are wagering on preoccupying the people and diverting their entire attention to food prices and the details of daily life, believing that obsession with these issues for a long time will weaken our people's interest in national issues and therefore adversely affect the struggle for the crossing.

But the enemies of Iraq are wagering on illusions and miscalculations which cannot possibly penetrate the wall of Iraqi steadfastness and strong national will. There is no going back on continuing the struggle and making all sacrifices for the sake of reaching the bank of victory and safety as soon as possible.

We must remind whoever wants to know the source of Iraqi steadfastness and national will power that the vast psychological and material pressure which the Iraqi people have faced over the past 15 years have been sufficient, under any theoretical or normal standards, to create despair, frustration, and loss of patience and hope leading to capitulation to the status quo. But the great Iraqi people, who are the creators of the first civilization in human history and the heroes of great historic epics and deeds, have depended at every stage of struggle, and in the confrontation of any difficult circumstances, tribulations, and dangers, on their inherent power and famous characteristics, thereby increasing their power to resist, endure, challenge, defeat hardships, and overcome tribulations and dangers.

Thanks to their revolutionary instinct, our great people are deeply aware of the big facts. They deal with reality from a practical viewpoint which rejects domination and challenges all foreign threats.

Therefore, the present price spiral will be absorbed and overcome by state measures and arrangements, backed by the Iraqi people's increased awareness of rationalized consumption, austerity, and reducing purchases to the minimum. The additional hardships we are facing today are no more than temporary effects of last desperate attempts by the enemies of our country and people. The crossing will take place through the unified national will of the Iraqi people. Afterward, a boon will spread among all and Iraq and the its people shall witness great days, God willing.

More Reportage on Russia's Zhirinovskiy, Delegation Visit

Zhirinovskiy on Influencing China's UN Vote

JN0103155395 Baghdad INA in English 1100 GMT 1 Mar 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Baghdad, March 1, (INA)—Leader of the Russian Liberal Democratic Party Vladimir Zhirinovskiy on Monday said that he would make his influence on China to vote at the Security Council in favor of Iraq with regard the sanctions. In a press conference, Mr Zhirinovskiy said that he would visit China to help end the trade sanctions.

He said that he had good impression from his meeting with President Saddam Husayn. "We talked about all problems, about results of the US-led war (against Iraq),

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future, modernism, developments in the world, the influence of Zionism forces on the Middle East region and the negative results in Russia," Zhirinovskiy said.

He said that he also discussed with President Saddam Husayn the current tour of the US representative at the UN Madeleine Albright. Zhirinovskiy said that he is against such an American action.

Zhirinovskiy urged his country to have strong influence on the Security Council to lift the sanctions on Iraq.

"We hope that this year sanction will be eliminated and Iraq must have an opportunity for development", he said.

He said Russia can help Iraq construct various economic projects and meet all Iraq's needs.

"Iraq and Russia are friendly countries and strategic allies for twenty years," Zhirinovskiy explained.

"I agree with all what President Husayn has said this morning and he agrees with what I have said," he added.

"During three hourse are discussed world and local problems very deeply." [sentence as received]

Says Saddam Seeks Regional Stability

JN0103180195 Baghdad INA in Arabic 1530 GMT 1 Mar 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Amman, 1 Mar (INA)—Vladimir Zhirinovskiy, leader of the Russian Liberal Democratic Party, has said that his visit to Iraq, which he concluded yesterday, was successful and fruitful.

In a statement to the correspondent of the Iraqi News Agency in Amman today, Zhirinovskiy added that his meeting with His Excellency President Saddam Husayn has given him firsthand knowledge of Iraq's (?sincere) desire to create stability in the region and to cooperate with the UN Security Council [UNSC] to implement its relevant resolutions.

Zhirinovskiy commended the Iraqis' steadfastness and ability to cope with the sanctions. He lauded their accomplishments in the area of reconstruction, drawing on their own intrinsic potentials, despite harsh circumstances.

Zhirinovskiy urged all world states and political and humanitarian organizations to do their utmost to lift the blockade and put an end to the Iraqi people's suffering.

The Russian Liberal Democratic Party leader reiterated his party's support for the Iraqi people in their just struggle against the schemes aimed to undermine their endeavors, noting that he will do his best to contribute toward lifting the sanctions.

Zhirinovskiy expressed his confidence in the ability of the Iraqi people to cope with the circumstances of the unfair blockade and regain their normal status in the region. He noted that the sanctions will not last for ever, given the current development in the stands of UNSC members.

National Assembly, LDP Issue Statement

JN0103190095 Baghdad INA in Arabic 1320 GMT 1 Mar 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Baghdad, 1 Mar (INA)—The National Assembly and the parliamentary group of the Liberal Democratic Party [LDP] in the Russian Duma have expressed their categorical rejection of U.S. attempts to use the issues of human rights and minorities as an excuse to interfere in the domestic affairs of world states in order to achieve political objectives that are hostile to peoples' aspirations.

In a statement issued today at the conclusion of their meetings, they called for condemning the attempts of U.S. imperialism to force new conditions on Iraq during the UN Security Council's periodic review sessions of the sanctions.

The two sides underscored the importance of making concerted efforts to meet the challenges posed to the Iraqi and Russian peoples to achieve security and stability in the region and the world at large, and uphold the peoples' right to make their choices freely and to have their sovereignty and national independence respected.

The two sides underlined the need for continuous coordination between them at regional and international forums on issues that concern the Iraqi and Russian peoples so as to promote the prospects for bilateral cooperation in the political, economic, oil, and trade areas.

National Assembly Speaker Sa'di Mahdi Salih signed the statement for Iraq, while Vladimir Zhirinovskiy, chairman of the parliamentary group of the LDP in the Russian Duma, signed for the Russian LDP.

BABIL Writer: Iranian Attack Serves U.S. Aims

JN2502155095 Baghdad BABIL in Arabic 15 Feb 95 p 1

[Article by Salah al-Mukhtar: "The Stupidities of Tehran's Small Satans"]

[FBIS Translated Text] The Iranian serpent has returned to its old custom of biting with the fall of darkness. Several days ago, the Iranian Government committed another of the crimes now familiar in the record of the Iranian regime. It launched an armed attack on the Iraqi marshlands, in an obvious attempt to render another "great service" to the United States and Zionism. Despite the fine texture of its body, this crippled and reprehensible Iranian serpent has raised its head to spit venom all over the Iraqi body.

The neutral observer cannot overlook one significant fact confirmed by every incident, i.e., that the Iranian

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regime has not stopped rendering its services to the United States and Zionism on the question of prolonging the criminal blockade of the Iraqi people. It sometimes fabricates stories about the "persecution of southerners" and presents them as a gift to the United States to use as a justification for prolonging the blockade, and at other times it offers false information about Iraqi use of chemical weapons.

The recent incident confirms—for the umpteenth time—that the Iranian regime is one of three parties seeking to prolong the blockade of the Iraqi people: First, the United States and Britain; second, Kuwait, Husni Mubarak's regime, and Saudi Arabia; and third, the Iranian regime. All these regimes cooperate in the common effort to find justifications for prolonging the blockade of the Iraqi people. This fact is known to every Iraqi. Therefore, the Iranian Embassy in Baghdad which hangs a placard saying: "The United States Is the arch Satan" does not know yet that the "arch Satan" shares the presidential seat with Rafsanjani and protects it from "angels."

Column Warns Iranian Rulers Against 'Aggression'

JN2502163095 Baghdad AL-THAWRAH in Arabic 16 Feb 95 p 2

["Standpoint" column by Mu'ayyad 'Abd-al-Zahrah: "Why the New Iranian Aggression?"]

[FBIS Translated Text] Judging by the treacherous Iranian aggression on Hawr al-Hawizah earlier this week, one cannot but observe that this oppressive neighbor is no more than a warmonger by proxy and a rancorous and covetous opportunist who still wagers on expansion.

We do not believe anyone ignores or pretends to ignore the Tehran rulers' aggressive and malicious policies and their real inclinations, both past and present, toward disturbing and exciting the situation in the region in the service of foreign interests and plans. The Iranian regime's record in this regard contains hundreds of instances of outright encroachment and impertinence, with or without reason, in order to detract from and curb Arab sovereignty and concentrate its entire pressure on Iraq, especially after it was defeated and made to drink the "cup of poison" in the eight-year war, which it started and fueled.

Since the official end of the war, the Tehran rulers have not expressed any attitude which portends or shows their commitment to conventions and respect for international pacts. On the contrary, they have continued whenever possible to maneuver, procrastinate, stir up trouble, and disrupt every endeavor and movement toward resolving outstanding problems. In fact, it has transpired that the Iranian regime is so prone to telling lies and fabricating cheap allegations that lying has become characteristic of whatever the ayatollahs say or do.

Clear facts have exposed the Iranian rulers' dirty and despicable role in the chapter of treachery and treason, a role which complemented the 30-state U.S.-NATO aggression on our country. These facts have revealed those rulers' deep involvement in that criminal plan and in other acts. We see their disgusting allegations, their infiltration operations in an attempt to establish a foothold for their agents and forces, and their detention of our sons as prisoners and hostages for obvious blackmail and piracy. All this confirms these rulers are still gripped by delusions and motivated by conceit about the possibility of achieving their sick dreams at the expense of our sovereignty and dignity. We are not surprised by the new treacherous aggression. It is just another black chapter in their record of crimes and evil and aggressive attempts.

While this new aggression reflects their bankruptcy and their annoyance with Iraq's full recovery and steadfastness despite the unfair blockade, it also represents a message Tehran wants to communicate to Washington and its servile followers that it is ready to render its services at any time and that it can be relied upon as an agent to cause trouble and influence internal conditions in Iraq through such operations.

Despite these hostile stands and criminal acts of aggression and treachery, and whatever services they may offer to Washington and its followers, the Tehran rulers remain too weak to seize a single inch of Iraqi territory. In fact, their current behavior will only bring them more disasters. Therefore, we advise them—and we hope that they would heed this advice—to go back to what is left of their senses and consider the consequences of their stands. Iraq, which made them taste defeat, is not an easy meal. Iraq has been, and will remain, lofty, strong, and capable of deterring and disciplining every criminal aggressor who contemplates evil acts against its national soil.

Column Rebukes Kuwait's 'Conspiratorial' 'Boys'

JN2502160695 Baghdad AL-THAWRAH in Arabic 16 Feb 95 p 7

["Sidelines" column by Sabri Hammadi: "A Dishonorable Mission"]

[FBIS Translated Text] Kuwait's rulers continue their conspiratorial role against struggling Iraq with absolute hatred, malice, and meanness. They have not abandoned their efforts and their moves to instigate the international community against the steadfast Iraqi people, just as they have not stopped offering bribes and gifts and concluding unessential, costly contracts to persuade some governments to continue the unfair blockade on our country.

It is a dishonorable, mean, and dirty mission by the lowly and mean boys of Kuwait, having realized that a radical change has taken place in the international attitude toward the blockade and that the removal of this blockade is now just a question of time. They are frightened and motivated by their hatred, meanness, and political blindness.

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These midgets do not want to understand that international relations are not conducted through bribes and gifts and that there are no lasting enmities or friendships in politics, but lasting interests. They also do not want to understand that Iraq's present circumstances are temporary and that they will definitely disappear, regardless of how much they pay and offer or how long they indulge in evil and crime.

It remains to be said that their wager on using the best part of their oil revenues to maintain the blockade on the Iraqi people will prove completely worthless and devastating for them. Those who are suffering from financial and economic exploitation by the United States are definitely chasing a mirage.

Saddam Sends Message to Athens Solidarity Conference

JN2702190195 Baghdad INA in Arabic 1628 GMT 27 Feb 95

[Message by President Saddam Husayn to the second Athens Conference "for combating the blockade imposed on Iraq"; place and date not given]

[FBIS Translated Text] In the name of the people of Iraq, I am delighted to send to you greetings of appreciation and pride in your international conference. We appreciate your continued, noble efforts to lift the unjust blockade that has been imposed on Iraq for over 54 months.

Your meeting in the Greek capital represents the comprehensive human dimension of the confrontation against the enemies of right, good, and peace. The evil alliance's past and present practices against Iraq aim to bury the will of freedom and independence and to undermine the program of construction, progress, and national awakening pursued and implemented by the 17-30 July revolution in Mesopotamia, the seat of an ancient human civilization. What we have done within this program is a legitimate action and aspiration by any nation. However, it seems this program has clashed with the illegitimate imperialist objectives and schemes aimed at hegemony, trusteeship, and looting peoples' wealth.

You, along with all honorable men in the world, have taken a fair and daring position against the tendency toward aggression, domination, and mass annihilation which was led and implemented by the U.S. Administration using dishonorable means and amid wide media deception of the world public opinion in order to launch brutal aggressions on Iraq using the most sophisticated destructive and lethal weapons.

The U.S. Administration continued its [word indistinct] crime against children, women, the elderly, and the infirm by denying them food, medicine, milk, and the simplest requirements of decent human life.

Brothers and friends: Iraq has fulfilled the legal and political commitments stipulated in the UN Security Council Resolutions, particularly Resolutions 687, 715, and 823. In light of the objective legal reading of the Security Council resolutions, there is no longer any justification for the continued unfair blockade imposed on our steadfast people apart from the tendentious and [word indistinct] U.S. political motives.

According to its commitments, as stipulated in the UN Charter and the Security Council resolutions, the Security Council is demanded to work, as its first and urgent step, to implement Paragraph 22 of Resolution 687, which provides for lifting the economic blockade imposed on Iraq.

Strugglers: Resorting to reprisal collective punishment and using the weapon of starvation fully conflicts with the World Declaration on Human Rights, the international charters on civil, political, economic, and social rights, and other humanitarian charters.

From this premise, the demonstration Athens is witnessing is a [word indistinct] bell that is ringing [word indistinct] in the ears of those who are falsely boasting about the defense of human rights, as well as being a documented exposure of the suffering of the besieged Iraqi people and of the inhuman repercussions they are experiencing as a result of the continued comprehensive embargo against them.

Your continued perseverance and concern about championing the Iraqi people and defending their just rights and demands are an effective and positive contribution and a fine expression of human solidarity designed to confront all forms of injustice, evil, and aggression anywhere and anytime.

I salute you. Let the peoples' will for liberation, progress, and peace triumph for the sake of a secure, decent, and happy world based on consistent principles in terms of viewing man and the rights of states to sovereignty, independence, and security.

Opposition Radio Reports 195 People Executed

LD0103133395 Kuwait KUNA in Arabic 1130 GMT 1 Mar 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Tehran, 1 Mar—An Iraqi opposition radio has reported that about 200 citizens, mostly from the town of Karbala have been executed and their property and belongings confiscated, due to their opposition to the regime.

Voice of Iraq radio, which can be picked up here, added that 150 of those executed were from Karbala, while 45 people were executed at Abu Ghurayb prison, near Baghdad, towards the end of February.

This is the most recent wave of executions carried out by Iraq against the opposition. The regime executed a large number of officers and men of the Iraqi Air Force last month after charging them with planning a coup.

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U.S., UK, French Air Violations Protested to League

JN2802130695 Baghdad INA in Arabic 0944 GMT 28 Feb 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Cairo, 28 Feb (INA)—Iraq has lodged a protest with the Arab League over the violation of its airspace by the U.S., British, and French aircraft taking off from Saudi and Kuwaiti bases, and seriously threatening Iraqi security, territorial integrity, and national unity.

In a letter to 'Ismat 'Abd-al-Majid, the Arab League's secretary general, Iraq's permanent representative to the Arab League said that these aircraft continued to violate Iraq's airspace from 15 to 21 February, taking off from their Saudi and Kuwaiti bases and flying 481 missions of aggression.

Iraq's permanent representative to the Arab League attached with his letter a list detailing these violations and asked that the list be distributed among the member states.

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Rabin Denies 'Intensive' Negotiations With Syria

TA0103155595 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 1500 GMT 1 Mar 95

[FBIS Translated Text] The prime minister has denied reports that intense negotiations are under way with the Syrians. He said that for the last two months there have been no direct contacts and that he has no knowledge of progress made in indirect contacts.

The prime minister thus reacted to a report aired by CNN last night concerning the negotiations with the Syrians. Mr. Rabin said the report included some true and some unfounded elements and did not include key issues on which there is no agreement between the sides.

He noted that the source of the CNN report may have been an element close to the Syrians and added that the report may have been meant to create an amiable atmosphere in the United States on the eve of Secretary Christopher's visit to the Middle East.

Our political correspondent Shlomo Raz points out that Mr. Rabin made these remarks at a ceremony to hand the Interior Ministry over to Minister 'Uzi Bar'am.

Peres, Savir on Oslo Accord, Christopher Visit

TA0203131795 Tel Aviv IDF Radio in Hebrew 1100 GMT 2 Mar 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Foreign Minister Shim'on Peres today said that the interim accord with the Palestinians would be implemented in the course of 1995. Elections would also be held in the territories this year. Peres was speaking at a meeting of the Foreign Ministry brass, in which Foreign Ministry Director General Uri Savir handed Peres the ministry's plan for the 1995 work year. Our political correspondent Udi Segal reports:

[Begin recording] [Segal] Foreign Ministry Director General Uri Savir today said that Israel has not suspended negotiations with the PLO. Savir asserted that Israel and the Palestinians are cooperating fully in drawing the appropriate conclusions from the Gaza-Jericho First plan, the first stage of the Oslo Agreement. This morning, Savir presented Foreign Minister Peres with the ministry's plan for 1995, which will concentrate on the Palestinian issue. Savir, as opposed to Deputy Foreign Minister Yosi Beilin, believes that holding discussions on the permanent arrangement now will only bog down the negotiations. Savir noted that Yasir 'Arafat is also not in favor of moving on to the permanent arrangement at this stage.

[Savir] People inside the Israeli and Palestinian camps, not necessarily the negotiators themselves, who take a responsible view of the future, are against suspending the process or backtracking on it. They want to make more rapid progress toward separation or toward a permanent arrangement. I would not rule out the theoretical consideration of this possibility, because we may need it in the future.

[Segal] Savir said that in the meantime, however, Israel should hold negotiations on the interim accord.

Speaking at a meeting of top Foreign Ministry officials this morning during which he was presented with the ministry's annual plan, Foreign Minister Peres said that the second stage of the agreement with the Palestinians would be implemented as early as this year, with elections' being held in the territories within several months. Savir indirectly confirmed that the PLO is trying to include Hamas [Islamic Resistance Movement] in the elections as a political opposition party and spoke about the process of democratization that is expected to take place in the territories prior to the elections.

[Savir] Both Israel and the Palestinian Authority [PA] hope that the opposition elements opt for political, nonviolent means.

[Segal] The Foreign Ministry director general said that the political process with the Palestinians is irreversible and holds the key to the future of the entire peace process. Savir was nevertheless optimistic. 'Arafat's security policies have changed, his popularity is growing, and both sides are determined to implement the agreements. Savir said that the Israeli policy of separation does not preclude close cooperation with the Palestinians. In any case, Savir said, it was Rabin's intention that separation only take effect in the long run. [end recording]

[Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew at 1100 GMT on 2 March carries a similar report by political correspondent Shlomo Raz. In a recorded passage, Savir says: "Clearly, if someone walks up to 'Arafat and asks him whether he would like to discuss the permanent arrangement, the PLO chairman may indeed show such a desire; however, I can clearly state that this issue has not been raised at the negotiating table. Our current agenda deals with the interim accord and the second stage of the Oslo agreement."

[Later on in the report, Savir says: "We are presently examining the concept of separation mainly from the security aspect. In other fields, I can discern both among Israelis and Palestinians a desire for closer cooperation. Yesterday, the Treasury and Foreign Ministry, together with the Palestinians, formulated a concept paper on the industrial parks. I think there are other spheres of cooperation that are important. The process of early empowerment in the West Bank has been accompanied by a much higher level of cooperation than was the case in Gaza." Savir adds: "I do not think that the concept of separation has been fully consolidated yet. I think that separation pertains to two important levels. First of all, we do not want to rule the Palestinians. We will effect a separation in this respect, because against both their and our own desires, we have ruled their lives until now as a result of what happened in 1967. Second, we need a security separation to prevent terrorism. This does not mean that we are not prepared to work together and

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cooperate with most PA officials in order to ensure that this agreement is a success for both parties."]

[Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in English at 1100 GMT on 2 March carries another recorded interview with Savir, in which, replying to a question about the chances for a breakthrough during Secretary of State Christopher's visit, he says: "We want to learn mainly from this trip of the secretary of what really is the potential and the seriousness on the Syrian side, and we are definitely awaiting the report from the secretary when he will arrive from Damascus to Jerusalem so we can formulate our view, not based on rumors and leaks but on what President al-Asad will tell the secretary of state."]

Beilin Worried About U.S. Congress 'Isolationism'

TA0203121895 Tel Aviv MA'ARIV in Hebrew 2 Mar 95 p 2

[Report by Hemi Shalev]

[FBIS Translated Text] "The isolationist tendencies of the new U.S. Congress jeopardize U.S. national interests, give a boost to extremists in the region, and could ultimately affect Israel itself," Deputy Foreign Minister Yosi Beilin stated yesterday.

Beilin made these remarks to MA'ARIV in the wake of the House of Representatives' refusal to write off Jordan's debt and Israel's growing concern about the isolationism of the new Congress. "I am very worried about the decision concerning Jordan because it points to a very narrow perception of reality in the Middle East," Beilin said.

Beilin believes that Republican congressmen who are opposed to aiding the peace process are committing "a terrible mistake" from the point of view of U.S. national interests. The United States has a paramount interest to establish peace in the Middle East, he said. These congressmen see only the short-term expenditures and not "the huge expenditures the United States will incur in the next war in the Middle East," Beilin stated. Compared to those expenses, the deputy foreign minister added, the sums needed to support the peace process are tantamount to "pocket money."

He added that Israel must make clear to the Jewish organizations how interested it is in aid to the Arab countries joining the circle of peace. "What we are asking them is not that simple," he admitted. "After all, they are not used to lobbying for aid for the peace process." Nevertheless, the Arabs must know "that anyone who decides to go for peace with Israel will be able to enjoy the fruits of that peace."

Beilin Explains Permanent Arrangement Plan

TA0103155995 Tel Aviv HA'ARETZ in Hebrew 1 Mar 95 pp A1, A2

[Report by political correspondent Aluf Ben]

[FBIS Translated Text] Over the past few months, Deputy Foreign Minister Yosi Beilin has been working on plans for a permanent arrangement with the Palestinians. Beilin worked with Israeli and foreign research institutes and held exploratory conversations with prominent Palestinians, both by himself and through researchers Ya'ir Hirshfeld and Ron Pundaq, who had held contacts with the PLO prior to the Oslo agreement.

Last month Beilin, Hirshfeld, and Pundaq visited Stockholm, where they met with senior Palestinian Authority official Nabil Sha'th and General 'Abd-al-Razzaq al-Yahya. Sha'th subsequently declared his support for the immediate start of negotiations on the permanent arrangement.

Beilin told HA'ARETZ yesterday that he believes "in the permanent arrangement, because an interim arrangement will be hard to implement, and the implementation has been exacting a cost that can be avoided. The problem with the set five-year interim period is that it increasingly pressures opponents of the agreement to act to prevent its implementation, and their actions erode the public support."

Beilin added that "a permanent arrangement will be more easily attainable than a full interim arrangement, because both sides understand the need for compromise. A permanent arrangement would establish borders and other things that are not specified in the interim arrangement, a fact which naturally encourages the parties to establish as many facts on the ground as possible."

The deputy foreign minister suggests moving up the talks on a permanent arrangement—scheduled to start in May 1996—to suit the Oslo agreement timetable. "The fact that the talks on the permanent arrangement are due to begin in May 1996—with great pomp and many expectations, and at a very difficult period for us—presents a complex problem." Under his proposal, the negotiations on the interim arrangement will go on at the same time as the talks on the permanent arrangement, the objective being to achieve elections in the territories and IDF [Israel Defense Forces] redeployment outside Arab population centers in the West Bank.

Beilin suggests skipping the next stages of the interim arrangement, including additional IDF redeployment in the West Bank, and instead moving directly to the implementation of the permanent arrangement. After elections are held in the territories, Israel will negotiate with the elected Palestinian council.

Beilin prioritizes the components of the permanent arrangement according to the anticipated difficulty in resolving the issues. In his opinion, borders are the easiest issue to resolve. It is followed by security arrangements, the Palestinian entity's political status, settlements, refugees, and the toughest of all—Jerusalem.

He believes that parts of the permanent arrangement can be implemented before the 1996 Israeli elections. Referring to preparations for the permanent arrangement,

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Beilin says: "The Oslo agreement, which introduced the permanent arrangement issue as part of the agenda, prompted researchers on both sides to submit proposals, and that stimulated the thinking and gave cause for optimism, because we are going to need methodic thoughts when we launch the talks."

Regarding the exploratory meetings with Palestinians on the arrangement, Beilin says "there have been talks. People bring up questions and ideas, and there is plenty of opportunity for informal conversations." He adds: "I work on the assumption that the sides agree to a greater extent than is evident in public statements. Each side understands the other's red lines, and agreements can be achieved."

To prove that progress was achieved in the exploratory talks, Beilin cites the refugee problem. "It is regarded as an untouchable issue. Yet we learned in talks we have held with them, particularly in the multilateral framework, that they realize there are things to which we will never agree, which require a proper solution. A day after the talks, however, they revert to 20-year-old declarations, and our side does the same."

According to him, "there is a lot of room for imagination, creativity, and solutions similar to the agreement with Jordan, in which neither side feels he has been swindled." "Israel has already presented its stands, but the problem does not lie in the official stands, but rather in details and in more creative solutions."

The deputy minister says the plan for separating Israel from the territories is an element in the permanent arrangement proposal, which draws a clear distinction between the two entities. The permanent arrangement proposals drafted with the assistance of research institutes contain various alternatives, although they have not been fully developed. The exploratory talks addressed the proposal for an Israeli-Palestinian territory exchange submitted by researcher Yosi Alfer in his paper on borders prepared for the Jaffee Center for Strategic Studies.

Alfer suggests that Israel annex settlements abutting on the Green Line and surrounding Jerusalem. Proposals on Jerusalem's permanent status were drafted by the Jerusalem Institute for Israel Studies, which is associated with the deputy foreign minister's bureau. The foreign research institutes addressed the water distribution issue. Another paper on the permanent arrangement was compiled by the research department of a state-affiliated institution, which is subordinate to the Prime Minister's Office.

Over a year ago, a team of Mosad researchers submitted a report to Prime Minister Yitzhaq Rabin, who was examining alternative approaches to the permanent arrangement issue in a bid to establish Israel's objectives in the interim arrangements. The Mosad advised that a Jordanian-Palestinian confederation would be the best solution for Israel. The research team proceeded to develop additional ideas on the basis of its recommendations.

Egyptian Envoy Comments on NPT, Syrian Track

TA0103164795 Tel Aviv IDF Radio in Hebrew 1500 GMT 1 Mar 95

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Egyptian Foreign Minister 'Amr Musa' has rejected Israel's proposal to sign the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty [NPT] two years after a comprehensive peace is achieved in the Middle East. IDF correspondent Gil Zilberstein spoke a short while ago with Muhammad Basyuni, the Egyptian ambassador to Israel, who presented the Egyptian position.

[Begin recording] [Basyuni, in English] If there is different views, it does not mean there is a crisis. The idea is to establish a Middle East zone free of weapons of mass destruction—nuclear, chemical, biological weapons—and their means of delivery. This is our view and I think Israel also agrees to this idea. But now, we would like to put this idea in a framework, a timetable.

[Zilberstein translates above remarks into Hebrew and continues] Following the CNN reports about progress in the negotiations between Syria and Israel, Basyuni said that Syria's importance in achieving a comprehensive peace in the Middle East should not be underestimated.

[Basyuni, in English] Syria is a very important figure to achieve the comprehensive peace in our region. Without Syria I do not think it will be a comprehensive peace. Since Syria is the key for the comprehensive peace, we should do everything possible to achieve the peace between Syria and Israel. President al-Asad really, he took a strategic peace to achieve the comprehensive peace in the area. He is ready to give everything and to have everything, like the Egyptian precedent. [passage omitted] [end recording]

Commentary Views Egyptian Criticism of U.S.

TA0103183695 Tel Aviv HA'ARETZ in Hebrew 1 Mar 95 p B1

[Commentary by correspondent 'Aqiva Eldar: "American Test"]

[FBIS Translated Text] Washington—The report about the Egyptian foreign minister raising his voice at his Israeli counterpart brings to mind the story about man biting dog. The importance of the incident between 'Amr Musa and Shim'on Peres at Blair House lies in the fact that it took place in the presence of the host, the secretary of state of the United States, the country with the most vested interest in the dispute over the NPT [Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty]. The next day I attended an off-the-record chat with Musa at the Heritage Foundation think tank affiliated with the Republicans. There, too, Musa did not mince words about the U.S. Administration. "The United States must play the

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role of an honest broker and also take our considerations into account. If you favor universality, what about Israel?" he asked rhetorically and in the same breath added: "I cannot vote for universality and an indefinite agreement when the United States tells me 'Israel is a different story.'" At the end of his speech, and to the chagrin of the Egyptian ambassador, Musa smilingly acceded to my request to publish his remarks, including his harsh criticism of the double standards embraced by the United States.

The residual effects of Egypt's actions concerning the NPT are more interesting and no less important than the final outcome of this crisis. Assuming that President Husni Mubarak is conducting a rational foreign policy and weighing his profits and his losses, one may say that internal Egyptian and Arab political considerations have outdone his fear about the U.S. stick and his appetite for the U.S. carrot.

Actually, why not? Has the Middle East witnessed even one firm action by Bill Clinton toward any of the parties to the peace process? Has he sent a bill to Hafiz al-Asad for two sterile, if not embarrassing, meetings? And what about Israel? When was the last time an Israeli diplomat sweated blood in a meeting with an administration official dealing with construction in "greater" Jerusalem, a term absent from the U.S. diplomatic vocabulary?

Not since the "London agreement" fiasco by the Reagan-Shultz administration has the United States been perceived as such a political weakling in the Middle East (as well as in Europe, Russia, and China). The Egyptians are being warned that their conduct regarding the NPT affair will affect U.S. aid ($2.1 billion a year). Or are they? Republican Senators Jesse Helms and Hank Brown threatened to reassess aid to the Middle East countries (excluding Israel, of course) long before Egypt began annoying the United States. The Democratic administration will fight for the aid to the Egyptians, regardless of the renewal of the NPT, because Clinton cannot have in his record a confrontation with the most prominent Arab country and the first to have made peace with Israel.

The Egyptian chutzpah is to a large extent a direct consequence of the U.S. impotence in the civil war in Bosnia, its choosing the copyrights of Hollywood filmmakers over the human rights of freedom fighters in China, and the rising power of the isolationists in Washington. As far as nuclear deterrence goes, Israel may actually benefit from the boldness displayed by Egypt toward the Americans. The U.S. firm stand has illustrated to the Arab world the commitment of the largest and only superpower to Israel's security. Never before has the United States provided such a broad an overt umbrella to Israel's nuclear option. Egypt's policy forced John Holum, director of the Arms Control and Disarmament Agency, to declare that although the United States believes that Israel should sign the NPT it understands its predicament at a time when some of its neighbors persist in destroying it (as THE WASHINGTON TIMES reported on 25 January). Clinton has abided by his vow to minimize the risks taken by the Rabin government for the sake of peace.

On the other hand, where political deterrence is concerned, the Egyptian president's overt and continued taunting of the United States is not good news to Israel. The Americans left no doubt about the supreme importance that President Clinton attaches to the renewal of the NPT. U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher listed the effort to curb nuclear arms proliferation as one of the five key goals of U.S. policy for this year. His aide, Robert Pelletrau, stated at the end of a visit in Cairo last month that "no country should decide its position on such a vital issue based on the actions of another government."

The image of a weak Washington, being dared by a pauper nation such as Egypt, is very bad news to Jerusalem's most basic strategic interest. Hence, Israel's strongest interest should be to remove the tension on every side of the Jerusalem-Cairo-Washington triangle. The ill wind between Egypt and Israel hinders the chances of expanding and solidifying the circle of peace and affects the faith of Israelis and the good will of the Arabs.

The Israeli Government has a clear interest in harmony between the United States on the one hand and Egypt, Syria, Jordan, and the Palestinians on the other and in increasing their dependence on U.S. aid. The more they stand to lose from a dispute with the United States the more interested they will be to uphold the agreements with its protege (which anyway they think runs the show in America).

Finally, although Israel's refusal to join the NPT is at this point received with full understanding, there are some friends in high places in Washington who propose to the Rabin government to leave no stone unturned in its search for a compromise. They know that shortly after losing the vote about the renewal of the treaty—a test of Clinton's prestige and the U.S. strength—there will be Americans who will come back to haunt Israel with Musa's remarks about the contradiction between a universal treaty and the exemption of one country.

Foreign Ministry Agrees to Return of 1967 Refugees

TA0203060095 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 0500 GMT 2 Mar 95

[FBIS Translated Text] In the course of consultations at the Foreign Ministry, it was agreed that Israel would permit the return of Palestinians who had left the territories during the 1967 war, on the condition that their return not create foci of incitement in the territories.

Our political correspondent Shlomo Raz reports that the consultations at Foreign Minister Peres' office were held

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prior to next week's convening in Amman of the Arab-Israeli committee, which will deal with the issue. Additional consultations will be held next week at the Prime Minister's Office.

Likud Criticizes Agreement on Refugees

TA0203095195 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 0900 GMT 2 Mar 95

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Likud officials have expressed their opposition to the emerging position at the Foreign Ministry regarding the return of those Palestinians from the territories who were displaced by the 1967 war. 'Uzi Landau, the chairman of the Likud's bureau, said that the foreign minister is prepared to allow the return of millions of displaced people to Judaea and Samaria, in what is yet another government step toward opening the gates of the country for millions of refugees. Likud Knesset Member Mikha'el Eytan said that this is yet another government step to reduce Israel to the borders of Auschwitz. [passage omitted]

Operations Deputy on IDF Guidelines on Separation

TA0103160795 Tel Aviv HA'ARETZ in Hebrew 1 Mar 95 p A4

[Report by military correspondent Eytan Rabin]

[FBIS Translated Text] The Shahal Committee, which is currently formulating the separation plan between Israel and the Palestinian Authority [PA], will meet with Jerusalem Mayor Ehud Olmert to hear his position on Jerusalem. Olmert, whose request to appear before the committee was approved in what is a rare exception, will probably appear before the committee on Sunday [5 March].

The committee's last session was attended by Police Minister Moshe Shahal, Police Commissioner Asaf Hefetz, intelligence officers and representatives of the IDF [Israel Defense Forces].

Major General Me'ir Dagan, the deputy head of Operations Branch, yesterday presented the IDF's basic guidelines on separation.

Addressing the issue of Jerusalem, the major general said that the security forces should be reinforced in the capital but added that the scope of roadblocks should be reduced. Dagan said that the Israel Police should have responsibility for Jerusalem.

The major general said that resources should be invested in the areas alongside the Green Line, which should be fleshed out. The legal aspects of separation must also be examined. Maj. Gen. Dagan supported the establishment of roadblocks around Jerusalem and reducing the number of checkpoints inside the city. The major general confirmed that there was cooperation between the Israel Police and the IDF but asserted that it had to be strengthened.

An IDF source said that the most recent calculations indicated that the cost of the program is approximated at 300 to 400 million shekels.

Commander Bans Assembly Without Permission

TA0103192395 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 1900 GMT 1 Mar 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Major General Ilan Biran, commander of the Central Command, has issued an order that says that any assembly, procession, or vigil in Judaea and Samaria require prior permission.

The order was issued in the wake of demonstrations and protests staged recently in Judaea and Samaria. Our correspondent Dani Zaqen reports that Gen. Biran stressed that anybody violating the order would be dealt with by the law.

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Israeli Ambassador-Designate Visits Amman

JN0203081295 Amman JORDAN TIMES in English 2 Mar p 3

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Amman—The Israeli ambassador-designate to Jordan, Shim'on Shamir, paid a few-hour visit to Amman on Wednesday [1 March] and held talks with officials at the Israeli embassy and drove around the capital, an Israeli embassy spokeswoman said.

The spokeswoman said it was "premature" to discuss anything about Mr. Shamir's plans since his nomination as Israel's first ambassador to Jordan had yet to be confirmed by the Israeli cabinet.

"The ambassador-designate was here on a private visit that lasted a few hours, and there was nothing official about the visit," said the spokeswoman, adding that no Jordanian officials had met Mr. Shamir.

Other reports suggested that Mr. Shamir might have been here for "orientation" ahead of a possible appearance before the Israeli cabinet prior to his appointment, although such an encounter is not obligatory. He was also believed to be looking for a possible residence in Amman.

Foreign Ministry officials said the Jordanian government had not received any official notification of Mr. Shamir's nomination. In any event, such a notification, which would seek Jordanian approval of the nomination, could come only after the Israeli government itself approves it.

The officials, who preferred not to be identified, said they did not expect any problems with Jordan approving Mr. Shamir, an academician and expert on Middle East affairs.

Mr. Shamir, a professor at Tel Aviv University, served as Israel's first ambassador to Egypt.

His possible nomination as ambassador to Jordan was a compromise between Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin and Foreign Minister Shim'on Peres who favoured rival candidates, according to reports in the Israeli press.

The Israeli Foreign Ministry finalised Mr. Shamir as ambassador two weeks ago, but the cabinet has not taken up the issue yet.

In the meantime, Marwan al-Mu'ashshir, Jordan's ambassador- designate to Israel, was sworn in early this week in the presence of His Majesty King Husayn.

Dr. Mu'ashshir, who served as head of the Jordan Information Bureau in Washington and then as spokesman for the kingdom's peace negotiators with Israel, is expected to leave for Tel Aviv after the 'Id holidays.

Israel and Jordan opened embassies in Amman and Tel Aviv respectively in December, but both the facilities are operating out of hotels pending the location of suitable premises.

The Jordanian embassy in Tel Aviv, as and when fully functional from proper premises, is expected to have up to seven diplomats supported by administrative staff, local reports said.

Hammad, French Envoy Discuss Attack on Diplomat

JN0103181195 Amman Radio Jordan in English 1700 GMT 1 Mar 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Minister of the Interior, Salamah Hammad, has received the French Ambassador to Jordan, Bernard Bajolet. Discussions dealt with last week's attack on the French diplomat near al-Karak in southern Jordan. The minister said the attack was not aimed against the French diplomat in person, and explained to the French ambassador measures taken by the security forces in this respect.

Al-Kabariti Receives PLO's Qaddumi, 'Abbas 'Separately'

JN2602143395 Amman AL-RA'Y in Arabic 26 Feb 95 p 21

[FBIS Translated Text] Amman—Foreign Minister 'Abd-al-Karim al-Kabariti on Thursday [23 February] received, separately, at his office at the Foreign Ministry Faruq Qaddumi, head of the PLO Political Department, and PLO Executive Committee Member Mahmud 'Abbas.

Al-Kabariti discussed with Qaddumi and 'Abbas issues related to joint Arab action, Jordanian-Palestinian coordination, and the position of the various Arab parties on the progress in the peace process.

During the two meetings, al-Kabariti stressed the need for, and the importance of, joint Arab action to ensure the success of the peace process so that it can achieve just and comprehensive peace in the region and the national and regional objectives of all the Arab parties concerned with the current peace process in accordance with the resolutions of international legitimacy and the signed agreements.

Senate Head Meets Iraqi Parliamentary Group

JN2702201295 Amman Radio Jordan Network in Arabic 1200 GMT 27 Feb 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Senate President Ahmad al-Lawzi has said that Jordan, under its wise Hashemite leadership, has always supported its Arab nation and its just causes, proceeding from its belief in the unity of this nation and its common objectives. This came when al-Lawzi received a delegation of the Iraqi National

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Assembly led by 'Abd-al-Wahhab al-Hiti, chairman of the National Assembly Services and People's Affairs Committee.

Al-Lawzi said: We, in Jordan, are aware of the suffering of the Iraqi people under the yoke of siege, and hope that Iraq will overcome this crisis so that it will return to its nation to reinforce its march and glory. Al-Lawzi added that the Arab parliamentary branches should coordinate their stands before the coming meetings of the Interparliamentary Union [IPU] so that their role will be effective and influential when the IPU discusses the issues related to our region and its future.

Al-Hiti praised the stand of Jordan—leadership and people—vis-a-vis Arab issues, asserting that this stand has always remained balanced and moderate in the interest of the Arab nation.

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Fadlallah: Israel Given U.S. Green Light To Cause Problems

NC0103181295 Beirut Voice of Lebanon in Arabic 1715 GMT 1 Mar 95

[FBIS Translated Text] 'Allamah Muhammad Husayn Fadlallah believes that current circumstances do not give the impression that a large-scale event will be taking place in Lebanon, such as an unfair war waged by Israel on the southern front.

He said that Israel got the U.S. green light to create new problems [in Lebanon] to confuse the Lebanese situation.

Shams-al-Din Denounces Israeli Blockade, Praises Syria

NC0203102195 Beirut Radio Lebanon in Arabic 0900 GMT 2 Mar 95

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] [passage omitted] In the 'Id al-Fitr sermon, Higher Islamic Shiite Council Chairman Shaykh Muhammad Mahdi Shams-al-Din emphasized that the Israeli blockade of southern shores is a siege of Lebanon's political will; it aims to put pressure on Lebanon's political will vis-a-vis the international equation.

He noted that what is harder and more bitter than the insolent Israeli pressure is that reckless international stance of the bystanders which frees Israel's hands to commit its crimes.

He stressed that coordination with Syria is full-fledged and absolute. It is a primary condition for Lebanon to emerge from its predicament, liberate its land from occupation, and regain its sovereignty and independence, he added.

Buwayz on U.S. Travel Ban, Israeli Blockade

NC0103185695 Beirut Radio Lebanon in Arabic 1630 GMT 1 Mar 95

[News conference by Foreign Minister Faris Buwayz with unidentified correspondents in Beirut on 1 March—recorded]

[FBIS Translated Text] [Buwayz] Taking into account recent developments in Lebanon, I believe that the renewal of the U.S. travel ban to this country is simply unjustified. Moreover, it is an impractical measure when viewed from the angle of Lebanese-U.S. relations. I believe that the bureaucratic momentum to renew such measures prevailed this time over the need to reconsider the ban in light of the new facts in Lebanon.

[Correspondent] Will this affect the Lebanese-U.S. security dialogue?

[Buwayz] To begin with, this security dialogue is not discussing any particular proposal right now. When a proposal is made, we will examine it and see how earnest it is. We will make an appropriate response to every proposal.

[Correspondent] Mr. Minister, don't you think the renewal of the ban casts doubt on the adequacy of the Lebanese proposals?

[Buwayz] At any rate, one must point out that the new U.S. decision contradicts the statements made by some U.S. circles that had indicated that the Lebanese-U.S. security meetings were positive.

[Correspondent] Your Excellency, according to some U.S. statements, the United States sympathizes with the Israeli position on the naval blockade. As we learned today....

[Buwayz, interrupting] When did they say this?

[Correspondent] There were reports that this was said in Washington....

[Buwayz, interrupting] No, no, we cannot rely on second-hand reports. Such reports cannot be traced to an identifiable source.

[Correspondent] All right, all right. Today the Israeli deputy defense minister and the Israeli Army chief of staff said that they were not laying siege to the Lebanese ports but only blocking the sea routes to Lebanon to prevent the arrival of tourists in Lebanon.

[Buwayz] First of all, the current Israeli aggression must be judged on the basis of the existing facts, not on the basis of the description that certain Israelis wish to give. What is happening is an assault in the full sense of the word. It is totally unjustifiable because there was no resistance operations before the Israeli siege. However, the difference between blockading the ports and conducting a naval siege is merely a verbal one. It is an Israeli attempt to sound smart in the media.

[Correspondent] Your Excellency, you have started an international and Arab alert over the siege. In light of the contacts you have made, will the naval blockade continue?

[Buwayz] We are continuing the diplomatic efforts we have started. Naturally, we will carry out further steps if it becomes evident that the blockade will not be halted in the next few days.

Junblatt Says Toxic Waste Dumped Into Sea

NC0103211195 Beirut Voice of Lebanon in Arabic 1215 GMT 1 Mar 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Minister of Refugee Affairs Walid Junblatt has stated that the suspension of environmental

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expert Pierre Milachev [government consultant on the issue of toxic waste reportedly buried in various sites in Lebanon in the 1980's and the issue currently under investigation by a state prosecutor] is a form of covering up the issue of the toxic waste. At a news conference held today, he stressed that Italy did not ship out the toxic waste barrels but dumped them into the sea. He expressed surprise at the Italian ambassador's statement that his country shipped out the toxic barrels. He said that Minister Salim Muqbil is protected and influential circles want him to maintain his post.

Meanwhile, Junblatt called for paying compensation to the fishermen in the south. He stressed that he will not attend the cabinet meeting should it be held in the south, saying that holding the meeting there would be theatrical.

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Spokesman Denies CNN Report on Progress in Talks

JN0203073195 Paris Radio Monte Carlo in Arabic 0500 GMT 2 Mar 95

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] [passage omitted] The U.S. Cable News Network, CNN, reported progress in talks between the Syrians and Israelis through secret diplomatic channels. However, a Syrian Foreign Ministry spokesman denied these reports and said bilateral negotiations have been practically suspended since the meeting held between the Syrian and Israeli chiefs of staff in Washington in December 1994.

Peace in 'Real Danger' Unless Israeli 'Defiance' Stemmed

JN2602153595 Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 1230 GMT 26 Feb 95

[Station commentary]

[FBIS Translated Text] The Israeli military escalation in southern Lebanon and the military siege imposed on Lebanese ports can no longer be considered a strange or new development. Such familiar practices have become part of peace the Israeli way and a way of welcoming any U.S. envoy to the region. What is really strange is the idea that the denunciation of this continued aggression an issue that might rupture the UN Security Council. Consequently, in the view of the team that dominates the UN Security Council and embellishes the image of Israel in the international body, this sort of denunciation is deemed a disservice to the peace process. What is more strange is that those concerned about this issue call at the lobbies of the international body, rather than in its main hall or during its sessions, for self-restraint. Such calls are displayed as the maximum of what can be done to maintain what they call the momentum and continuity of the peace process.

The Israeli military escalation and siege on Lebanese ports has proven once again that Israel searches for war in peace and for hegemony and control in the concluded agreements. It also wants to flex its muscles in the shows it is carrying out. Israel has become accustomed to exacerbating the situation in southern Lebanon and pursuing a policy of scorched earth whenever the U.S. Administration decides to send an emissary or to search for information to boost the peace process. By so doing, Israel wants to prove to the Arabs and let the U.S. Administration be its witness that this way of dealing with the parties and events shows the kind of peace it wants in the region and the way it wants to settle the conflict for historical rights. The current circumstances have allowed Israel to use such practices while those concerned kept their mouths shut and did not speak a word of the truth.

We are not saying anything new if we say that the U.S.-sponsored peace process is in real danger and will face an inevitable impasse unless the U.S. Administration, the UN Security Council, the institutions of international legitimacy, and European nations move to play their role and assume their responsibilities to face up to the [Israeli] aggression, arrogance, and glaring defiance of the will of the world and the peoples of the region. Matters may go on the way Israel wants them, but not indefinitely. There are lessons and examples from human history in which the balance of powers was reversed and evils fell apart. History has never thrown rights into oblivion nor has it bypassed any people. Terrorism and aggression have never managed to deceive all the people all the time. Right is right and wrong is wrong no matter how unclear things may appear.

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Afghanistan

Jihad Groups Forming United Front Against Taleban

LD0203104495 Tehran IRNA in English 0857 GMT 2 Mar 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Islamabad, March 2, IRNA—Efforts are under way in various parts of Afghanistan to establish a united front to confront operations of Taleban group.

Afghan sources told IRNA Wednesday [1 March] that representatives of some jihadi groups had held negotiations in the past few days in this connection in Pakistan's Peshawar and in Jalalabad, capital of Afghanistan's Nangarhar Province.

The Taleban group which has gained control over several provinces in southern and central Afghanistan says it will take Kabul and form a real Islamic government.

It is also making efforts to win support of some jihadi groups for its movement. At the same time, the group is negotiating with representatives of Rabbani's government but has so far failed to reach its objectives.

A source in Afghanistan's Jam'iyat-e Eslami party [Islamic Party of Afghanistan], led by Rabbani, has announced that Ahamd Shah Mas'ud's talks with Taleban leaders had failed to gain any result.

The talks started few days ago in Maidanshar, center of Wardog Province, to settle differences between the two sides on disarming the people and establishing security in Kabul.

The same source told IRNA in Peshawar that Mas'ud who was representing the government in the talks rejected Taleban's request of handing over arms and leaving security in Kabul to the group.

As a powerful ally to Rabbani, Mas'ud had earlier declared that he was against delivering arms to a certain gorup, saying that it should be carried out by a legal group monitored by the government.

Meanwhile, Afghan sources believe that Taleban has a force of 25 to 30 thousands and say the group has a variety of arms in its possession including planes, helicopters and heavy weapons.

Talebans: No Decision on Attacking Kabul 'Yet'

LD0103150495 Tehran IRNA in English 1435 GMT 1 Mar 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Islamabad, March 1, IRNA—Leader of Afghanistan's Taleban militias, Molavi Mohammad Omar said in Qandahar on Wednesday [1 March] that his group has not yet decided to launch an offensive on Kabul.

In an interview published in today's issue of the Karachi-based 'DAILY NEWS,' Omar said that Taleban militias are capable of capturing Kabul.

He said, "At present we follow the policy of negotiation, but, we would consider attacking Kabul if the negotiations channels are closed."

Omar said that Talebans would give a one-week deadline to its opponents for retreatment or surrender if it decided to launch an offensive on Kabul.

Negotiations between Afghan Government and Talebans in the past ten days yielded no fruit.

Taleban leader strongly denied that some foreign agents are working among the ranks of the militias and that the group was being backed by a foreign power. He said that all the forces under his command were being trained inside Afghanistan.

Qandahar, in southern Afghanistan, was the first area that Taleban captured and turned into their headquarters.

UN Official Details Plan for 'Peaceful Future'

AU0103160095 Vienna WIENER ZEITUNG in German 1 Mar 95 p 3

[Report by Gisela Vorrath: "Rasuly Confident About UN Plan"]

[FBIS Translated Text] Afghanistan's current president, Borhanoddin Rabbani, intends to hand over power to a transition government appointed by the United Nations on 21 March. This was stated by Srajuddin Rasuly, member of the UN Interim Council for Afghanistan, in an exclusive interview for WIENER ZEITUNG.

Political scientist Rasuly, who comes from Afghanistan and lives in Vienna, was a member of the delegation of Mahmoud Mastiri, former Tunisian foreign minister and UN commissioner, who last week tried to achieve the installation of an interim government in Afghanistan and an end to the civil war. Rasuly says that the mission has not failed even though the change of government did not take place on 20 February as originally planned. Because of the new conditions of power, Rabbani refused to resign his mandate as head of state, which had already expired.

As reported, the Taleban militias, a group of students that have emerged from the Koran schools in Pakistani exile, have conquered all of southeastern Afghanistan over the past few months. They drove away Rabbani's prime minister, Golboddin Hekmatyar, and are standing in front of the doors of Kabul. Therefore, the handing over of power had to be postponed and the original UN plan had to be amended, Rasuly explained. In agreement with Rabbani and his government, the United Nations had arranged to appoint a transition government, which is to consist of representatives of the civil war parties as well as of independent exile Afghans. This interim government should then work out a new constitution within

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two years and present this constitution to the traditional Afghan Council, the Loya Jirga. The Loya Jirga should then adopt the constitution and also decide on the future government of the country.

As a result of the changed situation, Rabanni has meanwhile joined the demand by the Taleban that, instead of the parties that emerged from the resistance against the Red Army, the 30 Afghan provinces should be represented in the transition government.

According to Rasuly, this means that the three largest groups of Afghanistan will be the strongest political force and thus determine the country's future. These groups are the Jam'iyat-e-Eslami of President Rabbani, the Junbesh-e-milli-Islami of Uzbek General Rashid Dostum, and the Taleban, who mainly unite the provinces inhabited by Pashtuns. These three groups have established civilian administrations in nine and seven Afghan provinces respectively since the withdrawal of the Soviet Army.

Four representatives of the UN Interim Council for Afghanistan—among them Sultan Mahmoud Ghazi, the cousin of the reformer king, as well as former Justice Minister Abdul Sattar Sirat—have stayed in Pakistan in order to settle the still unsolved issues by 21 March, Rasuly reported. Among these issues are, for instance, the establishment of an independent security force, which can guarantee the work of the future government and the safety of the capital city of Kabul. In addition, mediation between the various ethnic groups in Afghanistan is to be continued.

The new constellation of the UN plan still includes the membership of 10 independent persons, primarily Afghans who live abroad—such as former Prime Minister Yussuf or Rasuly himself—in the transition government. After his return to Vienna the political scientist stressed that it is certainly better to settle the still open question before power is handed over, in order to facilitate stable government work. From this point of view, it cannot be called a disadvantage that the planned change in power has been delayed a month. "Despite all the complications of the situation, it is thanks to Mastiri's skill in negotiations that there is now justified hope for a peaceful future for Afghanistan," Rasuly stressed.

Hezb-e Wahdat Forces Fire Rockets at Kabul

LD0103170595 Kabul Radio Afghanistan Network in Pashto 1530 GMT 1 Mar 95

[FBIS Translated Text] While the Muslim people of Kabul make preparations to mark 'Id al-Fitr, seven rockets and mortar shells have been fired into the residential areas of Kabul today by Mazari's band [Hezb-e Wahdat-e Eslami -Islamic Unity Party]. [Words indistinct] four members of a family were martyred, and four others were injured. The rocket barrage took place at a time when the Islamic State of Afghanistan and the people of Kabul prepare for the implementation of the UN peace plan.

Rabbani Sends Message to Clinton on 'Id al-Fitr

LD0103175095 Kabul Radio Afghanistan Network in Pashto 1530 GMT 1 Mar 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Esteemed Professor Borhanoddin Rabbani, president of the Islamic State of Afghanistan, has wired a message of gratitude to Washington in response to U.S. President Bill Clinton's 'Id al-Fitr message.

With great pleasure, I received your message on the occasion of 'Id al-Fitr. Allow me to express best wishes on behalf of myself and the people of Afghanistan to you and the people of the United States. The Islamic State of Afghanistan and the Afghan nation make joint efforts with the world organization's peace-seeking efforts and have taken firm steps toward peace and stability in Afghanistan. It hopes that the efforts of Mr. Mahmud Mestiri will yield fruitful results. Taking this opportunity, I wish you health and the people of the United States peace, prosperity, and success.

Bangladesh

Economy Said 'Moving on the Right Track'

BK0203084595 Dhaka Radio Bangladesh Network in Bengali 1500 GMT 28 Feb 95

[Station commentary]

[FBIS Translated Text] The country's economy is moving on the right track. This was stated by the governor of the Bangladesh Bank [state bank], Khorshed Alam, while addressing a news conference in Dhaka on Monday [27 February]. The governor said the country's economy is stable and added that the economic programs are being successfully implemented. As a result, the macroeconomic situation has stablized.

Meanwhile, it has been possible to achieve the budget target fixed for the first six months of the current fiscal year. During the six months between July to December last year, apart from the rise in imports and exports, remittances and investments in the private sector have also increased. In the agricultural sector, loan distribution has increased by 200 percent. Apart from this, during the first six months of the fiscal 1994-95, the inflation rate remained at 3.6 percent while the GDP was 5.5 percent. Political instability prevailed during this period, while a deficit in foodgrain production due to unfavorable conditions was recorded. However, the macroeconomic situation was stable.

The condition for economic prosperity is political stability. In the past two decades since the country's independence, Bangladesh has had only a brief period of stability. If a major food shortage does not recur and if a consensus is reached on the political situation, then it would be possible to achieve the targets for all sectors in the budget for fiscal 1994-95.

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Though the inflation rate increased marginally in the first six months of the current fiscal year, it did not obstruct normal economic growth. During this period, imports and exports increased. In the past six months, about $1.6 billion worth of goods were exported. In the corresponding period of fiscal 1993-94, total exports amounted to about $1.23 billion. In the first six months of the current fiscal year, exports increased by 22 percent compared to the corresponding period of the last fiscal year. Besides, during the last six months of the current fiscal year goods worth about $2.40 billion were imported. In the corresponding period last year, Bangladesh's total imports amounted to $1.90 billion. Imports in the last six months rose 25 percent compared to last year, due to the import of machinery and spare parts for small and medium scale industries.

In the current fiscal year, credit disbursement for the industrial sector has increased significantly. During the past six months, it amounted to 6.06 billion taka, or 31 percent more than last year. Apart from this, direct investments in the private sector in the past six months has been estimated at $5 billion.

The main aim of Bangladesh's economic efforts is to eradicate poverty within the shortest possible time. The present democratic government has come to power with a pledge of economic emancipation, with a view to making the people happy and prosperous. In the past three and a half year, the government has been engaged in poverty eradication activities and has achieved success. Thus, Prime Minister Khaleda Zia can bodly claim that the fruits of the countrywide development programs have started reaching the people. If the reality is to be accepted, then no one should hesitate in recognizing the truth of this statement. Agricultural and industrial production has also increased. Employment is also rising as a result of industrialization. Economic activities have also increased as a result of the expansion of road networks and bridge construction. At the same time, the foundation for human resource development has been laid by expanding the education system. All these activities are aimed at increasing the income of the people. Poverty can be eradicated by creating opportunities to increase people's income.

This positive development has earned the confidence and appreciation of the outside world. Foreign investors have now become very keen to invest in Bangladesh. At the same time, investments will play a direct role in poverty eradication. Bangladesh is emphasizing poverty eradication within the shortest possible time and the people have started reaping its benefits. In this regard, there is no scope for any difference of opinion. Poverty can be successfully eradicated through proper implementation of the development programs. Under all circumstances, the implementation of such programs demands peace and a disciplined atmosphere. There is no doubt that the country's present macroeconomic situation is good. The reason is the country's foreign exchange reserves is gradually increasing. At present, the reserves are about (?$3) billion, which is sufficient to partially meet any emergency situation.

India

Official Denies Assisting Iran in Chemical Warfare

BK0203060095 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 0435 GMT 2 Mar 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] The Indian Embassy in Washington has described as highly misleading a report in an American daily that Iran is building chemical warfare plants with the help from Indian firms. In a letter to the daily, the Indian ambassador, Mr. Siddhartha Shankar Ray, said India has no chemical weapons and Indian companies do not have the technology or expertise in this matter.

Official-Level Border Talks With PRC Begin

BK0103161295 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 1530 GMT 1 Mar 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] India and China will hold official-level talks in New Delhi tomorrow to consider fresh confidence-building measures to maintain peace and tranquillity along the border. This is the third meeting of the Joint Experts Group set up to go into all aspects of the issue.

The Indian side at the talks is led by Mr. Shiv Shankar Menon, joint secretary in the External Affairs Ministry, while the nine-member Chinese delegation is headed by Mr. (Wang Yangqui), head of the Asia Division in his foreign office.

UN Delegate: Kashmir 'Integral Part' of Nation

BK0203060995 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 0245 GMT 2 Mar 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] India has told the United Nations that Jammu and Kashmir has been and will always remain an integral part of the country. Addressing the 51st session of the UN Human Rights Commission in Geneva yesterday, the leader of the Indian delegation, Mr. Ghulam Nabi Azad, said that Pakistan's reference to plebiscite has no meaning in view of the historical facts and legality. He charged Pakistan of waging three wars against India to annex Jammu and Kashmir. He said the cause of the problem in Jammu and Kashmir is Pakistan's role in sponsoring terrorism and fuelling secessionism. He said unbridled terrorism spawned by Pakistan in Jammu and Kashmir has taken a toll of thousands of people. He called upon the world body to consider as to how Pakistan is indulging in defying international norms of human rights. Mr. Azad said Pakistan is trying to destroy Kashmir [word indistinct] by forcing fundamentalism under the shadow of the gun. Outlining the measures taken by the government to create conducive conditions for restoration of

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the democratic process, he said electoral rolls and delineation of constituencies are underway. The measures have had a positive impact on the situation, he added.

India's representative to the commission, Mrs. Neelam Sabharwal, rejected the Islamic grouping's call for an OIC [Organization of the Islamic Conference] fact finding mission to Kashmir. Exercizing the right of reply to the OIC statement on Jammu and Kashmir, the Indian delegate said the current disturbed conditions in the state are the result of external involvement in terrorist activities.

'Hard-Core Militants' Surrender in Kashmir

BK0103162395 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 1530 GMT 1 Mar 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] In Jammu and Kashmir, 24 hard-core militants, including a woman, surrendered to the security forces at Manasbal in the presence of village elders. They also handed over a large quantity of arms and ammunition, including eight AK-47 rifles, six pistols, one antitank mine, and six grenades. This is the largest single surrender in the recent months, indicating the disenchantment of these militants with the perpetrators of terrorism in the valley.

Indo-U.S. Relations Viewed With 'Uncertainty'

BK0103132395 Delhi THE HINDUSTAN TIMES in English 1 Mar 95 p 13

[First part of article on "Indo-US relations" by Patwant Singh: "Washington's double-speak"]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] The Republican control of the Congress and Senate has added a new element of uncertainty to Indo-US relations, although they were far from satisfactory during the years of Democratic ascendance in Washington. Even prior to that, as Chester Bowles, who twice served as US Ambassador in this country, had pointed out "India and America have never found it particularly easy to understand each other. And for good reason.

While Washington was irritated by India's policy of nonalignment, her ties with the USSR, and an annoying preference for a socialist economy, New Delhi found the American-sponsored arms culture which had brought the arms race to her doorstep, infuriating. Despite the moderating influence of perceptive persons in these two geographically distant democracies, their relations continued to be strained.

Even as Indians and Americans tried to understand each other's cultural distinctions and aesthetic temperament, and found much to admire in their intellectual triumphs, political differences marginalised these areas of appreciation. Amongst these were India's stand on the turbulent events in Hungary, Czechoslovakia and Vietnam, and Washington's irksome pronouncements on Kashmir, the liberation of Goa and the Indo-Pakistan war which helped create Bangladesh.

But easily the most damaging of all in Indo US relations was the American arming of Pakistan. Washington's militarisation of India's neighbour, an outcome of its geo-strategic plan of containing the USSR, introduced a distracting element in the foreign and domestic policies of India and Pakistan. In India's case, it became the biggest stumbling block in Indo-US relations and brought the Indians and Soviets closer than they had ever been. In fact, till Stalin's death in 1953 and the setting up of CENTO [Central Treaty Organization] and SEATO [Southeast Asia Treaty Organization] in 1954-55 which led to the arming of Pakistan, India's relations with the Soviets were often hostile. Moscow had called Mahatma Gandhi "a charlatan and a mountebank" and on his death in 1948 the USSR was the only country which refused to send even a message of condolence. Washington's military alliance with Pakistan radically changed this relationship.

It not only pushed India into embracing the Soviet Union, but led to her militarisation as well, with successive Indian governments showing a disturbing preference for a weapons culture which calls for ever-high outlays on a larger army, navy and airforce, sophisticated aircraft, submarines, battleships, tanks, guns and other weapons of war, bigger domestic armament industries and space technology. And casting a long shadow over these, the spectre of India acquiring a nuclear strike capability.

The debate on the latter has now taken on an emotional resonance. The US, convinced that India will develop nuclear weapons, is determined to prevent it by whatever means including making her sign the nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty [NPT]. India finds the NPT discriminatory as it seeks to curb non-nuclear weapons states without curbing the stockpiling and refinement of their nuclear arsenals by the weapons states. But the provisions of the NPT are inequitable only in their interpretation. Not in the actual document. Article VI clearly aims at facilitating "the cessation of the manufacture of nuclear weapons, the liquidation of their nuclear stockpiles, and the elimination from national arsenals of nuclear weapons and the means of their delivery pursuant to a treaty on general and complete disarmament under strict and effective international control".

The nuclear weapons powers obviously find this Article distasteful. Far more distasteful to Indians is the racial arrogance and conceit underlying the presumption that India can be forced to abandon her nuclear programme and to "Do as we say not as we do." This nuclear apartheid is compelling even the opponents of nuclear weapons to favour them as a reaction against the colonial mind set which wants India to submit to its dictates. Yet the only moral course open to New Delhi, considering its obligations to the country's underprivileged millions, is a

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unilateral moratorium of the development of nuclear weapons, even if only for a limited period. Because the billions they will cost will not come from the politicians, the rich or the self-appointed "specialists" but from the deprived and despairing 300 million who live below the poverty line, as the monies which could give them a more decent life will be spent on gaining India admission into the nuclear weapons club—whose membership her sick nuclearites yearn for. India's decision would also be an expression of her concern for a more humane and civilised world order.

The argument advanced by those who want India to stay on the nuclear course is: since the US had for four decades high-lighted the success of nuclear deterrence in keeping peace in Europe, why cannot the same logic be applied to the Indian subcontinent? Bernard Lown, winner of the Nobel Peace Prize, provided the answer when asked the same question. While acknowledging the double standard at work her, he said that possession of nuclear weapons does not deter wars: "The possibility of a nuclear riposte did not deter North Korean incursions into South Korea, the American misadventure in Vietnam, the Argentinian attempt to occupy the Malvinas, the Russian aggression against Afghanistan, or the Iraq invasion of Kuwait." Indian hawks could take note of this.

Ironically, not only was the raison d'etre for India's militarisation in the mid-fifties provided by US policy makers, but this time too they are pushing India towards nuclear bombs and missiles. As James Carrol perceptively pointed out in THE BOSTON GLOBE, "despite the rhetoric, the great friend of nuclear proliferation, as of weapons proliferation generally, is in the United States" because the US strategy for preventing nuclear proliferation is fatally flawed by the assumption that non-nuclear states will forever accept the interior status that goes with the American notion of world order. That assumption makes proliferation inevitable".

Even in the United Nations, ostensibly established to ensure international peace and development, nuclear weapons count since the final right to take political decisions which affect all nations, rests with the five permanent members of the Security Council, all of whom are nuclear powers. The United States, Britain, France, Russia and China have the veto power which lets them dictate terms, bar moves they disapprove of, and suppress the democratic assertiveness of member states. Not surprisingly, their vetoes are exercised when the self-interest of one or the other of these permanent members is threatened. The US and Britain have obviously perceived their interests threatened more often that the others since they have case 80 per cent of the vetoes in the last several decades. In addition to votes, economic sanctions, embargoes, political arm-twisting, military intervention and other means are frequently used to bring defiant nations to heel.

Interestingly, in the last 50 years, the Council has had just five permament members—all of them nuclear powers, even though the UN's membership has since quadrupled. No African or Latin American country has a permanent seat in the Council. Nor has India, despite having one-sixth of the world's population, a powerful industrial base, skilled manpower, unlimited natural resources, a huge defence establishment and a geographically strategic location. The exclusion of India and of representatives from Africa and Latin America is an unconscionable act of the kind which, according to Carroll, creates the sense "that only by acquiring nuclear weapons or now, threatening to acquire can a nation assure itself of being treated as 'equal' and 'sovereign' by the United States".

The manipulation of the UN by a few is making the Security Council a developed nations' club, setting the rules for international behaviour, and enforcing them militarily whenever a member steps out of line. In effect a front for military action by the powerful against the weak.

Washington's wilful assumption of its right to redefine the rules was [words indistinct] ruler was recently aired in less than elegant terms by an Assistant Secretary of State before the House Subcommittee on Asia and the Pacific. "I agree that India is a large country, a democratic, important country, and so, theoretically, it might be eligible (for permanent membership of the Security Council), but it also has a lot of political baggage at the moment in terms of its relationship with Pakistan and the Kashmir problem..." The reference to India's "political baggage" is disingenuous considering the frequency with which the Council's permanent members' fail to observe baggage rules. While their transgressions are no justification for New Delhi's mismanagement of the Kashmir crisis, or its inability to normalise relations with Pakistan, they are definitely meant to highlight Washington's double-speak which continues to dog Indo-US relations.

Competitive Advantages for Investment Viewed

BK0103114795 Delhi BUSINESS STANDARD in English 1 Mar 95 p 15

[FBIS Transcribed Text] India is truely one of the best places to start a production base now. Economists, have been telling us for long that India has a major competitive advantage in its cheap skilled labour. Thanks to the open door import regime, even raw materials can now be imported at reasonable rates. India, therefore, combines the best of low domestic wages and international price of raw material—which in many cases is lower than the domestic price. This is a clear business opportunity: import raw materials, make the products here and export them. Many are seizing this opportunity.

This gives an interesting spin to the investment pattern, India, foreign companies and securities analysis say, is a huge market, They are slobbering over the prospects of multinational consumer companies selling their wars to the great Indian middle clas.

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Now, if our theory of a new reexport opportunity is right, the relationship between Indian and foreign companies vis-a-vis the target markets will undergo a basis change. As MNCs [multinational companies] advance into the Indian economy with superior systems, technology, capital, brand and packaging, Indian businesssmen need not feel that opportunities are slipping past. In simple terms, as MNCs enter India, we can go out too. There are clear opportunities waiting to be exploited by offering India as a sourcing point.

This was being done by pharmaceutical companies anyway. Now, smaller companies are stepping forward to do this.

At least four or five new companies have come to my notice over the past few months that are exploiting this clear competitive advantage. They are setting up production bases for exports. Two companies, Goldwon Textiles and Range Apparel (going public next week) are setting up projects to sell woven cotton socks to Korea. They have different capacities. Goldwon is the larger of the two with a planned capacity of 78 lakh pairs per year and Range will make 29 Lakh pairs. But both are sourcing technology and equipment from Korea.

In each case one Korean company will supply the plant and machinery while another will guarantee a firm buyback. The competitive advantage of Gold won and Range is clear. They will be able to use low wages and procure cotton easily.

The other raw materials that go into making cotton socks—spandex, nylon and rubber threads will all be freely imported thanks to the liberal import regime.

The Koreans have been selling cotton socks for years to the US and European markets. They are now unable to meet this demand. Their wages have gone up and procuring cotton is a dicey business, or at least, not as certain as it is in India.

AEC Enterprises (also going public next week) is planning to make acrylic blankets and sell them overseas. It too is tying up with a Korean company for technology and marketing. Acrylic blankets are widely used abroad mainly in the US. Compared to conventional woolen blankets, acrylic ones are light and washable. AEC too is tying up with a Korean company. AEC will make the blankets here and the Korean company, Taiwan, will sell them under its own brand name. It holds a large share of the Gulf market and is planning an expansion into China where it will divert its current capacity. This will mean losing its market share in the Gulf which it does not want to. Taiwan will therefore source products from India for reselling. Consistent will our formula, AEC will import virtually its entire raw materials, the principle of which is acrylic fibres.

Again, despite the fact that acrylic fibres are available in India, a liberal import regime will allow it to import its raw materials. There are several interesting lessons to be learned from the examples of Goldwon, Range and AEC.

International cost:

All three companies have structured their business as export-oriented units and by being so they can import equipment and raw materials duty-free. This adds to the competitive advantage of low wages.

Tie up with NICs [newly industrialized country]:

One interesting thing to note is that those three companies have not joined hands with companies from the US, Germany, the UK, Japan or France, In the global marketplace Indian businessmen will probably be looking at Korean, Taiwanese and Singaporean companies for technology and markets. There is comfort of size, level of sophistication and proximity.

Means of finance:

All three companies are raising money from the market. One of them has also obtained foreign currency loan at 9.5 percent for import of equipment. For good projects getting money from markets and a cheap line of credit is not too difficult. Projects need not suffer for want of money or expensive money.

Business:

As above three examples prove, India has a major competitive advantage in woven fabrics—whether they are used for socks, blanket or furnishing. The opportunity is in thousands of crores. Other openings are in myriad industrial components. Almost everything said here fits into the general pattern that economists have been talking about for years—higher wages in new industrialised countries will force business to shift to poorer countries like India. But economic theory is one thing. The point now is that this theory is working and Indian businessmen should grab it.

Article Discusses Inflation, Fiscal Deficit

BK0103124295 Delhi THE PIONEER in English 1 Mar 95 p 8

[Article by Shankar Raghuraman: "Inflation to the Rescue"]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] With barely a fortnight left before the Finance Minister, Dr Mammohan Singh, announces his fifth successive Budget, a great deal of speculation in economic circles has not surprisingly been focussed on the likely size of the fiscal deficit for the current financial year. After the profligacy of 1993-94, when the fiscal deficit skyrocketted to a level of 7.3 percent of the gross domestic product at Rs [rupees] 58,551 crore against the budgetted figure of a considerably more modest Rs 36,959 crore, control over this parameter gained priority for Dr Singh and senior officials of his Ministry. The 1993-94 Budget, therefore, projected a cut in the level of the fiscal deficit both in terms of the absolute magnitude and is a percentage of

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GDP. The projected figure for 1994-95 was Rs 54,915 crore, which was assumed to be around 6 percent of the GDP. The question now is whether these targets will be met.

Targets set in the current year's Budget for specific heads of both revenue and expenditure, it now seems, may not be replicated in the actual performance, Fortunately for Dr Singh, however, the deviation from the targets are not all unfavourable, which makes the task of meeting the Fiscal deficit target somewhat simpler.

More importantly, the assumptions made at the time of the last Budget about the real growth in the GDP during the current year and the average inflation rate are likely to prove underestimates, particularly in the ease of the latter. What this means is that the GDP for 1994-95 will be higher by a significant amount than was earlier presumed, though not necessarily for the right reasons. As a result, the absolute level of the fiscal deficit can rise above the projected one and yet meet the 6 percent target set.

To get down to specifics, direct tax collections till January this year—that is, in the first 10 months of the financial year—were about 42 percent higher than those in the corresponding period of 1993-94. Within direct taxes, corporation tax collections were especially buoyant, thanks to increasing profitability in the corporate sector, and had grown by 53 percent till January. If this trend continues for the remaining two months of 1994-95, corporate tax collections for the year could exceed the target of Rs 12,480 crore by between Rs 3,500 and Rs 3,600 crore.

In all gross collections of corporation and income tax put together (which between them account for the bulk of direct tax revenues) could be over Rs 5,000 crore above the target for the year. Despite the fact that past of this would have to be shared with the States, the Centre could still end up having almost Rs 4,000 crore more from this source than it had initially bargained for.

In the case of indirect taxes, too, there is a significant increase in the current year. Customs duty collections till January were about 19 percent higher than the corresponding figures of 1993-94 and with the trade data indicating an increasingly fast pace of growth of imports during the year, the chances are that this will hold for the remaining months as well. If that does happen, the Centre could take in another Rs 1,500 crore more than the target of Rs 25,200 crore, none of which would have to be shared with the States.

Revenues from exercise duties has also risen, though by a somewhat smaller percentage, thanks partly to sharper than expected industrial growth, but in larger measure due to an increase in the inflation rate way beyond what the Government had projected. Thus, excise duty collections too may exceed the target of Rs 36,700 crore, though they are unlikley to do so by very much.

Thus total tax revenues to the Centre, net of the States share in central taxes, could be higher than the budgetted figures by up to Rs 5,500 crore.

As against this, the Centre is yet to realise its target of fund mobilisation from the disinvestment of shares of public sector units (PSUs). It had set itself a target of Rs 4,000 crore, against which it has raised around Rs 2,300 crore from the first round earlier in the year. Reports suggest that the second round may be a failure due to the slump in capital markets and the Government may end up raising only Rs 400 crore. That would still leave it Rs 1,300 crore short of target. There is, however, the possibility that the Government may, like in 1993-94, have another round soon after the presentation of the Budget and the revised estimated may thus be the same as the Budget estimates.

In any case, the increase in revenues is likely to be offset or more than compensated by increases in expenditure over the projected levels. The biggest factors in this would be the food and fertiliser subsidy bills.

Two fertiliser subsidy bill, which was put at Rs 4,000 crore is according to official estimates likely to touch about Rs 6,000 crore. The food subsidy bill is also likely to exceed the targetted Rs 4,300 crore by about Rs 1,700 crore, thanks to an unanticipated expenditure of about Rs 600-700 crore on sugar imports and increased carrying costs for buffer stocks of foodgrains. Thus, in major subsidies alone, the excess would be around Rs 3,700 crore.

It is not clear whether all of this increase will be accounted for the Budget for 1994-95 or part of it will be carried over to succeeding years, a stratagem that North Block has resorted to more than once in the past. There is also no substantive data on other expenditure heads and it is therefore difficult to estimate the overall increase over projected levels. The absolute level of the fiscal deficit may, therefore, be a little over the Budget figure, though some estimates suggest that it could reach Rs 65,000 crore.

As for the GDP, the Finance Ministry at the time of the formulation of the Budget last year had assumed a real growth rate of 5 percent. Latest estimates suggest it could be 5.3 per cent. Added to this is the fact that the average inflation rate for 1994-95 will not be below 11 per cent, against the assumed 7-8 per cent.

The combined effect of these two factors is that the fiscal deficit target (in terms of a percentage of GDP) could be met even if the absolute figure is in excess of the target by up to Rs 2,000 crore. Thus, while inflation might be proving Dr Singh's biggest worry at the moment, it will certainly help in making the fiscal deficit look healthy.

Official: Child Labor in Carpet Industry Reduced

BK0103153395 Delhi THE HINDUSTAN TIMES in English 25 Feb 95 p 19

[FBIS Transcribed Text] New Delhi, Feb. 2 The use of child labour has been reduced in the carpet industry fron 3.6 per cent in 1992-93 to 2.7 per cent in 1994-95 of the total work

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force of 15 lakhs. The Central Government is now contemplating its total eradication in the next few years.

Development Commissioner (Handicrafts) Ajai Shankar told newspersons that this was on the basis of the Textiles Ministry's survey to pinpoint the problem. Addressing a Press conference, he revealed that the carpet industry's export target was poised to exceed Rs 1570 crore this year. The 12th Carpet Expo India '95 is beginning in the Capital on Sunday [26 February].

Mr Shankar said that every exporter had to get his company registered compulsorily with the Carpet Export Promotion Council so as to ensure that no unit in the industry engages child labour. He said that this stipulation had been incorporated to avoid the time-consuming process of stamping each carpet with a declaration that a child was not the weaver of that particular carpet.

Mr Shankar said that now only 7.5 per cent of the labour force was in the 14-year age group. Besides medical check-up of the labour force by mobile vans, the literacy rate among the weavers was now 59 per cent as against 35 per cent in 1992.

Besides reducing the working hours of the labour from the average 9.2 hours to 7.8 hours, Mr Shankar said that the Government was now training women in the art of carpet weaving so that they "can replace the children in the work force".

He said that the four-day fair is expected to generate a business of Rs [rupee] 200 crore, where 100 manufacturers would display the best specimen of Indian craftsmanship to meet the demand of the foreign buyers.

Premier Automobiles To Manufacture Fiat Uno

BK2502090195 Delhi THE ECONOMIC TIMES in English 20 Feb 95 p 1

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Premier automobiles Ltd (PAL) has tied up with Fiat to make the Italian car maker's popular Uno model.

PAL already has a joint venture with Peugeot of France to manufacture the 309 model at its Kalyan factory in Bombay. The Uno will be manufactured at the Kurla plant.

Asked whether the Fiat tie-up will lead to a conflict of interest between the two partners, Mr Maitreya Doshi, the executive director of PAL, who led the negotiating team with both Peugeot and Fiat, told The Economic Times that two projects would complement rather than conflict with each other. Moreover, both Fiat and Peugeot had a very close business association in Europe as well as in the rest of the world, he added.

This is also the second time that PAL has tied up with Fiat. The first agreement for technical collaboration between the two companies lasted for 20 years from 1954.

The Project Approval Board is believed to have cleared PAL's new technical collaboration agreement with Fiat. The 1000 cc Uno is a two-box car and is expected to pose the first real challenge to the Maruti 800 and Zen.

The Uno was first introduced in the international market in 1984 and went through a facelift in 1989. It is slightly bigger than the Maruti 800 and is as spacious as the Zen.

PAL's Kurla factory presently rolls out 30,000 Premier Padmini cars per annum. The 50-year-old plant is being modernised and refurbished at a cost of Rs 150 crore [1.5 billion rupees]. The first Uno is expected to roll out in January, 1996.

The existing capacity at the Kurla plant is also being doubled from 30,000 to 60,000 cars per annum. Industry sources say Uno will give the plant a fresh lease of life as Premier Padmini orders have been stagnating following Maruti's entry.

Mr Doshi said the partnership with Fiat will be in two phases. The first phase will involve a pure technical collaboration agreement, while in the second phase Fiat will take up a stake in PAL.

Fiat proposes to integrate the Indian project into its worldwide strategy with a thrust on exports to regional markets, and establish reciprocal supply with other projects in Brazil, Indonesia and Turkey.

PAL is also expected to be involved in manufacturing Fiat's proposed world car—178—which is expected to enter the international market next year.

One of the highlights of the tie-up is low project cost for manufacturing Uno in India, Mr Doshi said. While the engine, gear box, welding, painting and assembly will be done at the Kurla unit, the body panels will be imported from Italy.

Import duty at 50 per cent and a weaker lira, currently quoting at 1,600 to a US dollar against 1,200 a year ago, have together made it attractive to import the body panels rather than investing in a press shop.

Against this, the project cost of the PAL-Peugeot joint venture, which will produce 60,000 cars a year, is Rs 6130 crore. Both PAL and Peugeot will hold 30 per cent stake each in the Rs 250-crore equity.

Peugeot and Fiat have joint ventures for producing light commercial vehicles in Italy and a mini van in France. The two companies also jointly manufacture several components.

The two companies also assemble models in common plants with common partners in several countries. Further, both companies share the same component manufacturers, some of who have already set up base in India.

The proposed Peugeot and Fiat models will be in two distinct market segments. The Peugeot 309, which is expected to roll out in April-May 1995, will be in the

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mid-size car segment currently dominated by Maruti Esteem and new entrants such as the Cielo, Opel Astra, Ford Escort and Rover Montego.

The Uno will compete in the small car segment, where the Maruti 800 is the only dominant player. And with the new deal, PAL could very well end up as the only car manufacturer with a product in every segment of the Indian market. Premier Padmini is the cheapest car in the market and its diesel version is a hot seller in the taxi trade.

The Uno has all the modern props of a small car, while the 309 fits in the luxury segment. Meanwhile, PAL's 118NE, which uses a Nissan-designed engine, is proving to be the poor man's luxury car.

Iran

Reactions to U.S. Claims of 'Deployed' Missiles

Ministry Spokesman Berates U.S. Report

NC0103150995 Paris AFP in English 1427 GMT 1 Mar 95

[Report by Laurent Maillard]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Tehran, March 1 (AFP)—Iran on Wednesday [1 March] implicitly confirmed a US report that it had deployed anti-aircraft missiles on its islands at the entrance to the Gulf but insisted such actions were strictly for defense.

"It is surprising to us that the United States would start such a noisy propaganda against our air defence readiness, as if US officials have forgotten recent threats of attack by the Zionist regime," foreign ministry spokesman Morteza Sarmadi said in a statement sent to AFP.

US Joint Chief of Staff John Shalikashvili said Tuesday that US reconnaissance had spotted Iran putting Hawk missiles onto launchers on the islands. He did not name the location.

Iran is involved in a territorial dispute with the United Arab Emirates over three islands—Abu Musa, Greater and Lesser Tunb—which it controls at the entrance to the vital waterway.

Shalikashvili said the reconnaissance had also detected the Iranians moving artillery into forward positions on the islands in the Strait of Hormuz, through which one-fifth of the world's crude oil is shipped.

"All of that could lead me to lots of conclusions," he said. "One of them is that they want to have the capability to interdict traffic in the Strait of Hormuz," he said.

But Sarmadi said the United States was "undertaking a vain effort to portray Iran's defensive readiness as a threat against its Persian Gulf Arab neighbors and as a threat to world trade.

"Our neighbors are well aware of the destructive role of the Zionist regime and its threats against security and stability of the region," he said.

The NEW YORK TIMES newspaper has quoted Israeli officials as saying the Jewish state could be forced to consider attacking Iran's nuclear reactors if it does not stop its alleged programme to secure nuclear weapons.

Earlier on Wednesday, the official Iranian news agency IRNA quoted an unnamed Iranian diplomat in Greece as denying the US missiles report as "unfounded and false."

Shalikashvili said Iran has the potential of replacing Iraq as the main military threat in the Gulf region around the turn of the century.

Iranian state radio fired back that "the United State wants to portray Iran as a menace to the Persian Gulf countries and limit the influence of its Western rivals in the region."

Reacting to a report that 25 US senators had backed a bill for wide-ranging economic sanctions against Iran, the radio said: "America has once again shown its anger against our (1979) revolution and resorted to its old ploys."

The Nicosia-based MIDDLE EAST ECONOMIC SURVEY (MEES) said Monday that the bill put forward by Senator Alfonse d'Amato would end all US commercial and financial transactions with the Islamic republic.

The United States, accusing Iran of seeking to procure nuclear weapons and supporting terrorism, has launched a campaign to isolate the Islamic republic on the economic and military fronts.

"This is not the first time that the United States seeks to undermine relations between Iran and the Persian Gulf Arab states as well as Europe and Asia," the radio said.

"But our relations with other countries are based on mutual respect and interest and that's why other countries emphasize on their ties with Iran."

U.S. Seeking To 'Exploit' Issue

NC0103210095 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran in Arabic 1745 GMT 1 Mar 95

[From "News and Reports" program]

[FBIS Translated Text] The chairman of the U.S. Joint Chiefs of Staff has raised a media and political furor against the Islamic Republic of Iran by claiming that Iran deployed anti-aircraft Hawk missiles at the Strait of Hormuz. He said that these missiles pose a danger to navigation through the Strait of Hormuz. He said this

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although the U.S. military naval presence in the region is the only danger to navigation and stability in the region.

General John Shalikashvili, the U.S. chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, said yesterday that Iran deployed anti-aircraft missiles at the entrance to the Persian Gulf. He claimed that by such actions Iran is trying to threaten international navigation at the Strait of Hormuz. Evidently these new claims are part of the U.S. media campaign aimed at straining ties between Iran and neighboring countries in the Persian Gulf region.

There is no doubt that the U.S. military presence in the Persian Gulf region is the only danger that threatens international navigation in the region. Any danger to international navigation in the Persian Gulf would harm all countries of the region. The United States is seeking to exploit this issue on the media level to serve its own interests.

If the United States is really concerned about the safety of navigation through the strategic Strait of Hormuz, it had better withdraw its forces and warships first to prevent tension in the region. Naturally, every country has a right to take the appropriate and necessary measures to protect its security. Deployment of anti-aircraft missiles is a purely defensive measure aimed only at confronting aggressive aircraft. Such a measure does not pose any threat to vessels or navigation at the strait of Hormuz and the Persian Gulf.

By launching such exposed media campaigns, the United States is trying to justify the policy of interference it is pursuing in the region. These claims were made against Iran after Washington realized the futility of its attempts to impose political and economic pressure on Iran. Naturally, this new U.S. media campaign against our country shows a desire to pave the way for an aggressive military action against Muslim Iran. Our country, which confronted all U.S. political and economic pressure, is capable of teaching Washington, if it dares to launch any act of aggression against it, a lesson greater than the one it had in Tabas [the desert area where U.S. helicopters and transport aircraft landed to save the U.S. hostages in the American Embassy in Tehran in the last year of former President Carter's term]

Military Says Claims 'Unfounded'

LD0203095995 Tehran IRNA in English 0837 GMT 2 Mar 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Tehran, March 2, IRNA—An Iranian military official here Wednesday [1 March] said that certain American officials every now and then would attempt to create tension and insecurity in the region by raising unfounded and baseless claims against the Islamic Republic of Iran.

Referring to recent remarks by the U.S. chief of joint staff, the official noted that such claims which were indicative of new U.S. mischief in the region, in fact were seeking a more serious illegal presence of the United States in the region.

The official added that Iran's neighboring coutries in the Persian Gulf were fully aware of the fact that the Islamic republic had always been a supporter of tranquility, peace and stability in the region and favored expansion of friendly ties with regional countries.

Moreover, he said, Iran would employ all its potentials to safegaurd safety of regional vital waterways since it believed its short and long-term interests would be maintained only in light of peace and stability.

He stressed that no new situation had been created in the region by the Islamic Republic of Iran, adding that regular military exercises were Iran's undeniable right.

The official reiterated that no government, the United States in particular, was authorized to interfere in such matters in the region.

Iran, as the big natural power in the Persian Gulf, had always supported peace and stability in the region against foreign intervention and viewed presence of alien forces, especially the Americans, in the region a serious threat to regional peace and stability, he noted.

'Failure' of U.S. Efforts To 'Wreck' World Ties Seen

LD0103123495 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 1058 GMT 1 Mar 95

[Station commentary]

[FBIS Translated Text] Although the efforts of the United States to wreck Iran's relations with the countries of the world have met with repeated failure and resulted in defeat for the White House, U.S. officials have failed to learn their lesson. In their latest efforts, a minority of U.S. Senate members have drawn up a proposal to present to the American Congress, recommending the imposition of international sanctions on Iran. On the basis of this proposal, the American senators have called on the U.S. Government to try to obtain the agreement of powerful countries to break off their commercial and economic ties with Iran.

In the meantime, by resorting to old ploys and trying to present Iran as something it describes as a threat to the region, the White House is striving to cast a shadow over relations between the Islamic Republic of Iran and Persian Gulf littoral countries.

Efforts by the United States to wreck the relations between the countries of the world and Iran are not a new thing; before this, too, numerous U.S. officials have made efforts towards this end. White House officials have consistently tried to force industrial countries to limit their ties with Iran. They have, thus, in their

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bilateral and multilateral contacts with industrial countries, raised the request that sanctions should be imposed on Iran and that they should limit their ties with Iran.

On the one hand, these actions are a result of U.S. hatred and anger toward the Islamic revolution and, on the other, they amount to efforts by the United States to limit the influence of rival powers in the Persian Gulf region.

The Islamic Republic of Iran bases its relations with other countries on accepted international norms and on the principle of respect for mutual interests; both parties achieve their aims in this way. For this reason, the world's big independent countries tend to underline the importance of maintaining their ties with the Islamic Republic of Iran, regardless of the wishes or demands of the United States and in accordance with the principle of safeguarding their national interests.

Paper Views U.S. 'Spy' Incident in France

NC0203133295 Tehran JOMHURI-YE ESLAMI in Persian 25 Feb 95 p 16

[Unattributed political commentary: "Spies Posing as Diplomats"]

[FBIS Translated Text] French Interior Minister Charles Pasqua has asked America to recall five of its citizens and specifically four diplomats who have been accused of spying in France. Paris- based LE MONDE reports: France's counter-intelligence organization suspects that these five Americans are members of the CIA. According to LE MONDE, these five Americans were trying to recruit high-ranking French officials as spies for America.

America has rejected these accusations and has even protested against the anti-American stands of the French interior minister and of LE MONDE. This crisis has affected Washington-Paris relations. Nevertheless, it seems that this revelation is merely a power struggle inside the French Government in the wake of the presidential elections in that country. The French interior minister's insistence on revealing this spy incident and the French foreign minister's strong opposition and stand against the interior minister, just when the two are among the main factors that can affect the fate of the French presidential elections, speaks of an internal political quarrel.

French Interior Minister Charles Pasqua, whom the judiciary police recently criticized in connection with an illegal eavesdropping scandal, used to be a supporter of Jacques Chirac, leader of the right-wing Rally for the Republic Party. However, in connection with the upcoming presidential elections, he recently shifted his support from Jacques Chirac to Eduard Balladur's candidacy for prime minister. Charles Pasqua's role in uncovering the American spies is considered to be a step to show that his political affiliation favors Balladur and is for weakening Chirac.

The uncovering of this spy incident is owed to the political rivalry and the differences of views among the ruling and influential factions in French society. In other words, the fact that American spy activities in other European countries which are American allies are not uncovered does not mean that there are no American spy activities in these countries, but that there are no political power struggles in these countries.

Nevertheless, this is only one side of the coin. The other side is the nature of the American diplomats' activities in foreign countries and even in countries that are U.S. allies. France is considered to be among America's major allies in Europe, and the spying incident by American pseudo-diplomats in these countries can make the Elysee officials review the dimensions of their political ties with America.

This crisis should have once again proven to the entire world that all the American embassies in the world are America's dens of espionage and that those who pose as American diplomats in various countries are veteran spies of the terrorist CIA organization.

This is not what only we say. It is what all those who have seen the true manifestations of spying and even of White House state terrorism in their countries also say. It is many years that the Muslim Iranian people have recognized the ugly face of American politics and behavior in the world. But every so often other nations too see this ugly face. The Americans' espionage in France should prove to the world that a government that resorts to illegal methods in its ordinary relations with one of its European allies does not have the least bit of competence to judge the behavior other governments as far as law, democracy, human rights, freedom, and ... [ellipsis as published] are concerned.

Khamene'i Leads 'Id al-Fitr Prayers in Tehran

LD0203084595 Tehran IRNA in English 0635 GMT 2 Mar 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Tehran, March 2, IRNA—Leader of the Islamic revolution Ayatollah 'Ali Khamene'i led the massive 'Id al-Fitr prayers at Tehran's grand prayer ground Thursday [2 March] morning.

Thursday marks the end of the holy month of Ramadan and the beginning of the month of Shawwal in Iran.

Hundreds of thousands of worshippers from all over the capital took part in the prayers at Tehran's mossalla (prayer ground).

Simultaneously with prayers at mossalla, 'Id al-Fitr prayers were also held by people all over the country.

The leader, in his second sermon, underscored the unity among Muslims and said that dignity and prestige of Muslims depended on consolidation of their ranks.

Ayatollah Khamene'i warned of the vicious objective of the enemies of Islam which was aimed at creating differences and sow discord among Muslims.

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He said that enemies of Islam by masterminding organized plots were attempting to put Muslims against each other as they had realized that Islam had placed new hopes in the hearts of people.

The leader branded the global arrogance as the enemy which had been slapped in the face by the Islamic revolution of Iran and said the U.S. was after creating a rift among Muslims.

However, the leader stressed, Muslim ummah would foil plots of the enemies through further uniting their ranks.

The strong and heroic Iranian nation and government, adhering to Islamic teachings, are extending friendly hands to offer assistance to all muslim nations, the leader said.

Ayatollah Khamene'i stressed that the present situation in Chechnya, Bosnia, Lebanon and Kashmir was a result of lack of unity among Muslims.

The leader pointed to massive turn-out of people in rallies on international al-Quds [Jerusalem] day and anniversary of the victory of the Islamic revolution and said such large gatherings guaranteed the revolution and frustrated the enemies.

He further said that people's presence in all social and political scenes would help settlement of problems and bring prosperity to the nation.

Earlier in his first sermon, the leader felicitated all Muslims across the world on the occasion of 'Id al-Fitr.

Va'ezi's Central Asian Tour Begins in Turkmenistan

LD2802210195 Tehran IRNA in English 2043 GMT 28 Feb 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Moscow, Feb. 28, (IRNA)—Iranian deputy foreign minister for Euro-American affairs Mahmud Va'ezi arrived in Ashgabad Tuesday [28 February] on the first leg of his trip to the capitals of Central Asian states and was welcomed by the Turkmen Foreign Minister Boris Shikhmurdov.

In their meeting later Tuesday the two officials reviewed outlooks in relations between Tehran and Ashgabad and agreed that closer bilateral relations would, in its own right, be promotive of peace and security in the region.

The Iranian foreign ministry official referred to the Caspian Sea as "the Sea of Cooperation" adding that the adoption of any decision relating to the Caspian should be based on the concurrence of all countries bordering the world's largest inland sea.

The two officials also reviewed latest developments in relation to the laying of a trunkline for conduiting Turkmen gas to Europe via Iranian soil and tripartite cooperation with Russia, Ukraine and with other countries of the region.

Iran and Turkmenistan, along with the Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan and the Russian Federation share the waters of the Caspian.

UN Envoy Rejects Allegations of Troop Movements

LD0103215395 Tehran IRNA in English 2127 GMT 1 Mar 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] United Nations, New York, Mar. 2, IRNA—Iran's permanent representative to the United Nations, Kamal Kharrazi in a letter dated 24 February 1995 addressed to the Secretary-General Butrus Butrus-Ghali, rejected all allegations made by the Iraqi Foreign Ministry concerning the movement of Iranian Armed Forces along the two countries' border.

Referring to Iraqi Foreign Ministry's letter dated 15 February 1995, Kharrazi mentioned that the Islamic Republic of Iran categorically rejects all allegations made by Iraqi Foreign Ministry.

The Armed Forces of the Islamic Republic of Iran had no movement whatsoever along the borders during the dates referred to in the above-mentioned letter. Despite the Iraqi allegations, our reports indicate that the prevailing situation in border areas during that period was calm and normal, stated Kharrazi in his letter.

The letter also underlines that the Iraqi Government is solely responsible for its own internal problems. Therefore, any attempt on the part of Iraq to link these problems with the Islamic Republic of Iran and Resolution 598 (1987) is considered dubious and unacceptable and contradicting the principle of good-neighborliness.

The Islamic Republic of Iran reiterates, once again, its commitment to the Security Council Resolution 598, and the principles of respect for the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Iraq and non-intervention in its internal affairs. Iran continues to believe in establishing good-neighborly relations between the two countries, and in this regard expects the Iraqi government to show its good intention for creating confidence and friendly relations between the two countries, the letter concluded.

At the end of his letter, Kharrazi has requested the United Nations' Secretary-General Butrus Butrus-Ghali to issue his order for the circulation of the letter as a document of the Security Council.

Clandestine Radio on Regime's Anti-Kord Propaganda

NC2802144195 (Clandestine) Voice of Iranian Kordestan in Persian 1630 GMT 26 Feb 95

[Report on "text" of interview with Mostafa Hejri, DPK secretary general in Iran, by unidentified correspondent; place and date not given—live or recorded]

[FBIS Translated Text] Dear listeners, the police propaganda apparatus of the Islamic Republic of Iran has been consistently broadcasting incorrect reports and various

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rumors about the DPK [Deomcratic Party of Kordestan] in Iran and its leaders. It is harboring illusions of undermining and destroying the DPK as well as creating discord and dichotomy in its ranks by means of falsehoods. It is obvious that the people of Kordestan never believe these rumors and fabrications disseminated by the regime's propaganda apparatus, but the Voice of Iranian Kordestan considered it necessary to interview our combatant Comrade Mostafa Hejri to clarify this issue and to elucidate and explain the objectives of the regime in doing so. We draw the attention of our dear listeners to the text of this interview:

The Voice of Iranian Kordestan correspondent expressed his gratitude to combatant Comrade Mostafa Hejri for accepting the radio's invitation to participate in this interview and asked his first question:

[Correspondent] By using its agents and its press, the Islamic Republic of Iran disseminates rumors among the people by means of reports against the DPK in Iran and against you personally because you are the secretary general. What is your opinion in this regard?

In response, combatant Comrade Mostafa Hejri said: In the course of the past year, the Islamic Republic of Iran—in addition to disseminating completely false and unrealistic rumors among the people of Kordestan—incorporates false and incorrect reports in its news presented to our compatriots in order to conceal facts and to agitate public opinion. One of the differences between the Islamic Republic of Iran's mass media and that of the progressive world is that in the latter, the means of mass communication, foremost among which are the newspapers, are for service to the people and to upgrade the level of public information by presenting international developments and events to them.

It is quite the opposite in Iran, where these means are used for generating apprehension among the people. It is for this reason that these ploys have been fruitless in Iran and people do not pay much attention to them. That is also why the circulation of newspapers in Iran is far lower than in progressive countries. The Islamic Republic of Iran is also gripped by the constant fear that the people will resort to satellite antennae to receive international news, and domestic television programs do not have much of an audience.

Therefore, it is obvious that there are hardly any people who believe reports carried in the Iranian newspapers and those who do constantly doubt their veracity. In any case, for the information of the dear listeners of the Voice of Iranian Kordestan radio, it may be worth mentioning reports in three issues of KEYHAN HAVA'I [international airmail edition] regarding our Party:

In its 1086th edition, the KEYHAN HAVA'I carried a report on "the leader of the dissolved Democratic Party of Kordestan in Iran was badly wounded in a clash with Barzani's forces" citing an Iraqi Kurdish source in Sanandaj. The report claims that in the civil war between the cadres of Iraqi Kurdistan, the DPK had fought on the side of the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan [PUK] against the Kurdish Democratic Party [KDP] of Iraq and in this clash, the DPK's secretary general—that is, myself [Mostafa Hejri]—had been wounded. It also reports that the secretary general of the DPK has support and assistance from Western country and is seeking to dismember Iran.

Similarly, the KEYHAN dated 7 January 1995 once again alleges that the leader of the dissolved DPK, who has just recovered from an attack on his life, expressed his concern about the proliferating insecurity in Iraq in an interview with al-Sulaymaniyah television. He is seeking to elicit the concurrence of another country for the residence and deployment of the counterrevolutionary elements.

The KEYHAN HAVA'I in its 1119th edition dated 8 February refers to the dichotomy inside the DPK and the martyrdom of Comrades Ghafur Hamzeh'i and 'Abdollah Sharifi as a result of inter-organizational differences and discord. Of course, this is nothing new, as the regime has constantly sought to depict every assassination of our comrades and co-combatants as the result of factional differences within the organization.

Our colleague then asks Comrade Mostafa Hejri: In your opinion, what is the regime's objective in disseminating such rumors and false allegations?

The secretary general of the DPK answers: The most important and foremost aim of the regime is that the DPK should be distanced from its neutral policy on the civil war between the two main parties in Iraqi Kurdistan and to attribute them to internal problems in Iraqi Kurdistan. It does not matter to the regime which side it favors.

This effort on the part of Iran is also evident from the reports disseminated in newspapers by its agents and lackeys in Iraqi Kurdistan and Iranian Kordestan. The Islamic Republic of Iran has initiated this campaign because it does not consider it enough that the two main factions in Iraqi Kurdistan are at loggerheads already. According to its policy with regard to the Kurdish people, the regime considers the best course to keep the DPK embroiled in this issue, thus escalating the war—so that the fratricide in Iraqi Kurdistan should spill into Iranian Kordestan and become a war between Iranian and Iraqi Kurds—and to keep the Kurdish movement preoccupied—so that it ignores the real enemy.

As a result the future of the victory of the Kurdish movement—which is brighter now than it was ever before—should become dark and bleak and this should tarnish the name and credibility of the Kurdish people. On the other hand, the seed of pessimism may be sown in the hearts of the Kurdish people to convince them that the Kurdish people are not able to administer their own affairs and the struggle in the path of freedom is fruitless. Therefore, the people should serve the regime.

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The other objective of the regime in pursuing the aforementioned policy is to generate apprehension among the Kordish people in Iranian Kordestan. Iran knows full well what position and popularity the DPK has among the Kordish masses in Iran, and how and to what extent they are affiliated to the DPK. They are happy about their party's success and victory and become strong hearted as a result.

Accordingly, by creating differences, problems, obstacles in their path, the regime seeks to heighten distress among the people. It is obvious that the dissemination of reports of a transfer of the DPK's personnel and bases and of the wounding of the DPK's secretary general is a source of immense concern and is done under pressure from Iran. Therefore, by propagating falsehoods, the Islamic Republic of Iran wishes to keep the people in a state of fear and anxiety, especially the people of Kordestan, who are disgusted with the regime and are constantly contemplating ways of delivering themselves from the ill-omened shadow of the regime.

It follows therefore that with these fabrications and deceptions, once again the regime is testing its rusty weapons, that is, the secretary general's bandying secessionist tendencies and the DPK's affiliation to Western countries. These remarks are so old and worn out that very few of the agents of this reactionary regime believe them and most of the people ridicule them.

Just as in the shah's era, when the pressure of the disenchanted masses shook the very foundations of the government, the regime's agents claimed that they were affiliated with foreign elements. The Islamic Republic of Iran has on numerous occasions accused the Iranian opposition of being linked to foreigners. It has repeatedly declared that the DPK is affiliated with the East, West, Zionism and so on. In reality, this mode of thought is common among all dictatorial regimes.

The issue of secessionism is also a legacy of the monarchical regime and now the clerical regime is seeking to use the same rusty weapon against the Kordish people. However, the fact is that except for the retrogressive regime of the Islamic Republic of Iran, no one even pays attention to these remarks and rumors and will never be deceived by them in the slightest.

In answer to the question: Do those rumors that you have mentioned have any element of truth in them? Comrade Mostafa Hejri continued his interview, saying: These reports are a figment of the imagination of Iran and do not have any resemblance to the truth. As the KEYHAN HAVA'I reported in its 14 June edition, not only was I not wounded in Iraqi Kurdistan and on principle no such skirmish had occurred with the Iraqi Kurdistan forces, I was in Europe on a party assignment and I had participated in a number of press and radio interviews at that time which had been duly disseminated at that time.

The KEYHAN newspaper's report was a fabrication, as were previous reports. Neither did an attempt take place against my life nor did I appear on al-Sulaymaniyah television. I was not interviewed on any other television network in Iraqi Kurdistan either. The so-called dichotomy and the factionalism among our ranks mentioned in this newspaper is as baseless as the other similar verbal and press allegations. I consider it necessary to mention the fact that in our party—as with the other democratic parties—freedom of expression exists and anyone can express his opinions openly at our sessions, even if they are in stark contrast to the opinions of others.

However, as regards disputes, the views of the majority are implemented as the will of the people. This is antithetical to what is done in the Islamic Republic of Iran, where everyone has to chant the praises of one Vali-ye Faqih [supreme jurisconsult] and leader.

At this point, our correspondent asked Comrade Mostafa Hejri: Could you please elaborate for the listeners of the Voice of Iranian Kordestan what basically is the DPK's stance and viewpoint on the civil war in Iraqi Kurdistan?

He answered: The DPK believes that the intra-Kurdish war is to be condemned regardless of its venue or form, especially the year- long imbroglio between the PUK and the KDP in Iraq which is not only destroying the political gains of the Kurdish movement in Iraqi Kurdistan, but will also inflict greater losses on the Kurdish movement in all sectors, especially in Iranian Kordestan. That is why we are opposed to this war. As far as it is possible for us, we have been striving to end this war. When that did not seem likely, we adopted a neutral stance, which continues even now.

We have friendly relations with the political organizations in Iraqi Kurdistan such as the factions and organizations in other parts of Kurdistan, and we will preserve these relations and ties, especially with the PUK and the KDP in Iraq. We expect these organizations not to be incited by Iran, our common enemy, and to respect the boundaries of our mutual ties, the principles of political relations, and reciprocal friendship.

In conclusion, Comrade Mostafa Hejri addressed our compatriots, especially the people of Kordestan, and said: I wish to address my esteemed compatriots, especially the brothers and sisters in Iranian Kordestan who have complaints regarding the (?oppression) by Iran, that they should not believe the remarks and reports in newspapers, (?publications) the radio and television, that is, by the regime's propaganda apparatus, especially those which pertain to the Kordish people's movement and the DPK in Iran.

The DPK is as strong as ever and is the biggest force supporting the people and it is for this reason that it is a thorn in the regime's side. The ultimate victory will be ours!

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SALAM Column Reflects Economic, Social Problems

1995 Series, Number 2

[FBIS Media Note] The Tehran daily SALAM carries a regular column, "Hello, SALAM," based on the purported telephoned-in complaints and remarks of ordinary Iranian citizens. The following comments by callers and sometimes by the paper are from January's editions.

These particular complaints deal with the high cost of living, difficulty with the telephones, air pollution, the high cost of education, the arrest of undesirable characters, individual values, animal medications, blackouts, smoking bans in public places and the customs' office.

High Cost of Living

[Caller] When the government began fighting overcharging, the price of eggs was 155 tumans per kilo. It is now 180 tumans. Tell the government we don't want it to fight overcharging. [12 Jan p 3]

[Caller] On 3 January, you said the price of high-quality cooking oil was 1,800 tumans, whereas it previously was 1,200 tumans. I'ld like to inform you that today its wholesale price reached 2,400. [12 Jan p 3]

[Caller] Why don't you write about the constant advertising about the Refah Store on television. People need butter, cheese, red meat, and poultry. These commodities either cost a lot or simply cannot be found. Building a store will solve no problems. You could erect a tent and sell these items, thus economizing on the cost of construction. Either import staples or invest in companies that will produce these goods. [14 Jan p 3]

[Caller] Obviously storekeepers do not consider the campaign against price gouging seriously because the bakery on Vali 'Asr sells cookies for 400 tumans a kilo while the one in Etehadih sells them for 320. I bought some zulbia [a sweet usually eaten during the month of Ramadan] which the storekeepers priced at 380 tumans a kilo. When I brought it home, I found they were in a 850 gram box, not a kilo. Apparently the campaign to confront price gouging was meant to cover up the price rises of sugar, 40 times, and oil, 30 times. Shopkeepers are charging what they want, and we don't know where or to whom to complain. [15 Jan p 3]

[Caller] A Friday prayer orator a few years ago, in a sermon, said that the price of meat in neighboring countries, such as Turkey, was 700 tumans, but not in our country. Right now the price of meat in our township is over 700 tumans. Need I say more? [16 Jan p 3]

Difficulties With Telephones

[Caller] The formula in the ad for the communications company is 1=55, which means that to make a telephone call, we should dial it 55 times and apologize 55 times. Tell the officials not to complain so much about the past and to try to improve themselves. In the past, digital technology did not exist. Ask the official of 1=55 to compare the cost of calls here with costs in Turkey, Pakistan and India.

[SALAM] The company can get these statistics. We hope they will take this data and make it available to the newspaper for purposes of comparison. [12 Jan p 3]

[Caller] I read the special answer provided by the communications company on 7 January. On 1 December 1988, I deposited 1,210,340 tumans with the communications company. After dealing with them for over 3 years at the Shahid-e Se'adatmand Center, they told me they have no record of payment there, and I should go to the Ayatollah Kashani Center. There, they told me I had no record there either. I was then sent from here to there and back. On 3 December, the Shahid-e Se'adatmand Center announced that my phone had been connected. But, at this very minute, as I am calling you on 7 January, my phone is still unconnected. [12 Jan p 3]

[Caller] It seems clear that phones are being assigned at a rate of one per minute. In Tehranpars [east of Tehran], the second circle area, on the other hand, we still do not have a phone, even though we deposited 100,000 tumans to the account of the communications company back in 1990. They tell us that the equipment in the area is not ready, and that they will let us know when they are ready. How much sense does this make? Even villages and hamlets have phone service? We have to get our money back. (two cases of complaint) [12 Jan p 3]

[Caller] Daily over the last two months, the office of communications has run an ad in every daily concerning its 10 telephone centers. Who pays for these ads? Ultimately the money comes from the people's pockets. What is the reason for the telephone ads?

[SALAM] Advertisements are one way of providing information to society. It also is profitable for the advertiser. [14 Jan p 3]

Air Pollution

[Caller] Why is nothing done about air pollution and no one thinks about the public health? Is concern about the environment mere talk? Have people's lives no value? [12 Jan 95 p 3]

[Caller] The municipality melts tar every day from morning till noon under the Khandan Bridge by the river bank. This has created many problems for nearby residents. You keep talking about pollution in Tehran. So, why are you melting tar and creating pollution by releasing the smoke in the air? Don't you realize this endangers public health? [12 Jan p 3]

High Cost of Education

[Caller] The adult education examination notebooks note that tuition can increase up to 20 percent. As a chemistry student enrolled in adult education classes, I paid 1,200 tumans for a laboratory class last term. We

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are now being asked to pay 8,000 for the same course. Is this 20 percent?! [12 Jan p 3]

[Caller] Which is the greater power, the Majles or a minister? Why does Minister of Education and Training Mohammad 'Ali Najafi constantly try to establish guidelines for the people and why does he want to convert schools into private institutions? Is it so they can collect money from the people? And, why is the Majles no match for one minister? [16 Jan p 3]

[Caller] I went to my child's school yesterday to pick up his report card. They did not give it to me. They told me I had to pay a great deal of money. How is it that Mr. Najafi [Mohammad 'Ali Najafi, Minister of Education & Training] can say that schools must not ask for money from parents at registration time, while permitting them to obtain money under various pretexes during the rest of the year. [15 Jan p 3]

[Caller] I am a civil servant retired on a 12,000-tuman monthly annuity. I don't have a husband. Yesterday, when I went to get my child's report card, they told me I would have to pay 5,000 tumans for it. Where am I supposed to get that? We can't continue an honorable existence this way. Our officials openly encourage us to steal. [15 Jan p 3]

Undesirable Characters in Society

[Caller] The security forces should pick up the repulsive characters who gather near the Daneshju Park. They are often junkies and homeless runaways from the provinces. They have truly made Daneshju [Student] Park a misnomer. [12 Jan p 3]

[Caller] In the Navvab area, above Sepah, addicts and deviants involved in revolting and unethical acts gang together in this area until the early hours of the morning. They interfere with public peace and quiet. The security forces should look into this. [12 Jan p 3]

[Caller] Instead of campaigning against satellite dishes or women not observing the hejab, the government should deal with hoodlums, ruffians, and the like. Dishes are limited to homes, but these people create problems out in the open streets. They will cause further problems. [14 Jan p 3]

[Caller] Hoodlums and rogues gather and brawl in the gendarmerie area. There has been no reaction to the complaints of the storekeeper of this area. Please bring this to the attention of the responsible officials and the security forces. They knifed someone on Friday. [14 Jan p 3]

[Caller] The interior minister used to talk a lot about the country's safety before taking office. Unfortunately, we can all see that there are more thefts and more hoodlums and rogues in the streets than ever before. [16 Jan p 3]

Individual's Lack of Value

[Caller] I am a college graduate with 25 years of research and training experience in the Ministry of Petroleum. My average salary in the last 10 years has been in the 17,000-18,000 tumans range. Ten years ago, I bought a second-hand Peykan [passenger car assembled in Iran]. I compared the car's value to my own and found that the car that cost 150,000 tumans ten years ago is worth 1.3 million tumans today, while my work is less valuable and meanful compared to 10 years ago. [15 Jan p 3]

On Fraudulent Animal Medications

[Caller] I am a poultry farmer. Please publish the news that there are people who manufacture fraudulent animal medications. Why doesn't the Organization for Veterinary Medicine look into this problem? There are three or four individuals who have been arrested several times in regard to this and then set free. They have always seized their fraudulent medications from them. If these people wanted to repent, they would have done so the first time they were arrested.

[SALAM] Will the caller give us a list of names so the matter can be pursued? [15 Jan p 3]

On Blackouts

[Caller] For some time now blackouts have become less common across the country or have even stopped totally. However, in the Soltanabad area, we have a blackout every day without exception. Are blackouts now observed only in the poor, deprived neighborhoods of workers? [15 Jan p 3]

Banning Smoking in Public Places

[Caller] The Majles approved the bill on banning smoking in public places. In reality, however, nobody observes it. For example, some soldiers smoke on the bus. One day, I asked one why he was smoking in a public place. He protested, and we almost came to blows. None of the passengers dared say a word.

[SALAM] To maintain credibility and the respect of the public, our brother soldiers have to watch their behavior at all times when they are wearing their sacred soldier's uniform. Respect for the uniform is the same as respect for clerical garb. [15 Jan p 3]

Confiscation by Customs

[Caller] About 45 days ago I sent several packages from Kerman to Tehran. After tracking them down, I discovered that the Tehran customs had confiscated not only our packages but those belonging to thousands of others. Is the customs service supposed to be involved in the transportation of goods from one province to another within the country? If there is such a law, why does the post office know nothing about it and accept the package? If there is no such law, why did customs confiscate the goods? [15 Jan p 3]

Agriculture Minister on KEYHAN Questionnaire

NC2802115595 Tehran KEYHAN in Persian 6 Feb 95 p 14

["Text" of KEYHAN questionnaire sent to cabinet ministers and officials "on the eve of the revolution anniversary" with responses by Agriculture Minister 'Isa Kalantari]

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[FBIS Translated Excerpt] 1. We are on the threshold of the second Five-Year Plan. What is Your Excellency's assessment of the first Five-Year Plan in your area of management? In comparing the statistics of this performance with the trend of similar activities prior to the revolution, can you please tell us what successes your ministry has achieved in the 16 years that have elapsed since the victory of the revolution?

[Kalantari] [passage omitted] Before the revolution, the agricultural sector was not very important to the policymakers and this sector registered a much lower rate of growth when compared to the other economic sectors, especially that of services and industry.

After the Islamic Revolution, it became possible to attain the objectives of safeguarding the country's independence in the field of procurement of foodstuffs. Therefore, in view of the momentous responsibility that the Agriculture Ministry had, it initiated a program for planning the provision of foodstuffs to a rapidly increasing population.

In the course of the first Five-Year Plan for economic, social, and cultural development, the growth rate of the agricultural sector was nearly 6 percent. That is more than double the rate of the increase in the country's population. Despite all the problems and impediments in its path, it achieved dazzling success in attaining the objectives envisioned in the first Five-Year Plan. In some cases it even exceeded them. That is why now one-fifth of the country's Gross National Product [GNP], one-fifth of the country's Gross Domestic Product [GDP], one-third of the employment, and four-fifths of the country's foodstuff needs are provided by the agricultural sector. It is now the basis for expansion in all areas and for the prosperity of the country's economy.

Despite these brilliant successes, a part of the population's foodstuff needs are still being met by imports. A general assessment of the capability of the agricultural sector in view of the potential resources and current capabilities reveals that if we speed up investment in this sector, we will be able to provide for the needs of an increasing population.

Comparison of Levels of Agricultural Land

Regarding the utilization of the potential in the agricultural sector in the course of the revolution and before, 4.64 million hectares of land were under dry and water farming. [passage omitted]

Production of Agricultural Staples

A comparison of the performance of the production staples between 1357 [year beginning 21 March 1978] and 1372 [year beginning 21 March 1993] reveals that in most cases, production doubled. [passage omitted]

Exports of Agricultural Products

The value of agricultural exports in 1359 [year beginning 21 March 1980] was 651 million rials, which in 1372 rose to an average of 63.7 billion rials, which marks the highest level of exports in the agricultural sector in agricultural produce—a difference of 76.4 percent. [passage omitted]

2. Recently, the government placed the campaign against high prices at the top of the list of its priorities, which was welcomed by the people and the media. What is Your Excellency's view—regardless of the area you manage—in this regard? In your opinion, what factors can bring results in this campaign and what obstacles need to be removed?

[Kalantari] One of the slogans of the Islamic Revolution was social justice, which is one of the most important desires of the people. In this regard, the safeguarding of public interest and the purchasing power of the public are the main objectives of the government. The government is obligated to prevent the extortion of the various strata of society, including the consumers, producers, and distributors in every way possible and not permit one section to harm another for the sake of excessive profits.

One of the ways of reining in prices is to ensure an adequate supply of goods needed by the people and this should be controlled by the government. This has been done with many goods, therefore, this artificial rise in prices should not exist. The government should deal with these agents of artificial increases in price very strictly and should use all means to prevent such a situation from recurring.

Therefore, President Hashemi-Rafsanjani and the government are determined to combat the artificial price increases and gradually create the means for doing so. These include an adequate supply of goods; establishing chain stores; fixing prices of essential and staple goods; and prosecuting violators, hoarders, and profiteers. In conjunction with these measures, the government should boost production of all those goods that are needed by the population.

The principled means for upholding social justice is to prevent price rises, to increase the people's income, more investment in increasing indigenous production, and stemming unbridled consumption and spending.

3. How do you assess the Islamic base of the Islamic Revolution in the political and cultural field, despite the plots of its powerful enemies?

[Kalantari] Today, I perceive that in most Islamic countries from the Atlantic to the Pacific Oceans a people's movement has begun for the attainment of Islamic aspirations, some of which are marked by a rapid pace of growth and some others are still in the initial stages. Undoubtedly, the role of the Islamic Revolution has been very decisive in this regard for all of them. Our revolution has been a model for them and we should show them that in practice the Islamic Revolution can result in establishing a government based on divine justice.

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This can be achieved on the condition that we act in the right manner, that is, by using the Islamic connotations of divine justice, we should combat tyranny and corruption, eradicate poverty and discrimination, boost production, improve the living standards of the people, and fight illiteracy and ignorance. We should also upgrade our knowledge in the field of science and technology in practice and expand development and prosperity in the country.

It is only in such circumstances that the international base of the Islamic Revolution can attain more rapid and extensive growth. If in our capacity as the cradle of Islam we do not achieve the above in practice, it is possible that, God forbid, the base of our Islamic Revolution would sustain heavy losses and this may retard its progress. We are also aware that the enemies of Islam are constantly seeking to hinder and obstruct our path as much as possible.

Despite the obstructions on the part of the enemies of Islam and Iran, praise be to God that the international base of the Islamic Revolution continues to broaden and, God willing, with the efforts of our revolutionary people in the path of increasing the pace of construction and immunity [mas'uniyat], this base will become consolidated further.

4. Did you ever think before the revolution that one day you would be pursuing important matters in the country's political arena in the capacity of a minister? Now that you are a minister, to what extent have you achieved your ideals?

[Kalantari] Regarding the first part of the question, I should state that I did not even think on these lines. The second part of the question about my ideals of employment I should state that when the difference between the levels of consumption and production of foodstuffs is reduced (from the commercial point of view) it means that I am closer to my objectives. I hope that in the near future Iran will not only emerge from its current situation in the balance of trade but will become one of the main procurers of foreign exchange needs of the country and of foodstuffs for a large part of the Islamic Republic of Iran's population.

In view of the 6 percent annual growth in agricultural produce, I believe that it is a good beginning regarding the first Five-Year Plan for economic, social, and cultural development in the country and I am optimistic that this trend will continue.

5. Do you have any reminiscences worth hearing regarding the cabinet sessions that you could share with KEYHAN readers?

[Kalantari] Perhaps the sweetest memory that I have of the cabinet session pertains to the remarks by our esteemed President Hashemi-Rafsanjani in answer to a question by a number of our colleagues. They insisted that a number of major, infrastructural projects—which would have delayed feedback and in the short term would have exerted immense inflationary pressure on society—should be implemented by the next government so that the people would not pressure the president and the current cabinet for these projects. With his distinctive magnanimity, the president replied: I did not become president so I could stake the future of this country on short-term welfare considerations and, God forbid, destroy our country. I have an obligation for the construction of the country to the maximum of my ability and to hand over a flourishing country to the next government so that it can continue the path of the Islamic Revolution with comfort.

It is worthwhile if the country prospers and its future independence is assured, even if I incur the displeasure of the people in the short term. He added: The people are so noble that when they realize why they are under pressure they will bear it.

This attitude indicates the limitless nobility of this great stalwart of the revolution and his mode of thought regarding the future of the country, the revolution, and posterity.

*New Radio Programs Gearing Toward West Africa

95P50067A Tehran KEYHAN in Persian 1 Feb 95 p 2

[FBIS Translated Text] The extraterritorial unit of the Voice and Vision of the Islamic Republic of Iran began broadcasting radio programs in "Hausa" geared toward the countries of West Africa.

The public relations office of the Voice and Vision reports that this radio station was inaugurated in a ceremony in the presence of Dr. Larijani, the head of the Voice and Vision Organization, and other political personalities.

In his speech at the inauguration of this radio station, Dr. Larijani stated: The Islamic revolution of Iran reached fulfillment according to the wishes of the late Imam. The mission of the Voice and Vision Organization is to deliver information to the thirsty people of this dark world, to increase sympathy and agreement among human beings, and to bring closer together the hearts of Muslims, and consequently to become a cause for cultural promotion for the world's new generation.

The programs of this radio station can be received in the countries of Nigeria, Burkina Faso, Mali, Chad, Benin, Sudan, Cameroon, Togo, and Ghana.

Pakistan

U.S. Investment Attracted at Cost of Nuclear Plan

BK0103135495 Islamabad THE MUSLIM in English 1 Mar 95 p 4

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Rawalpindi, Feb 28—The central secretary information Pakistan Muslim League

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[PML] (Nawaz Group), Mushahid Hessain, has alleged that the PPP [Pakistan People's Party] government attracted huge US investment at the cost of country's nuclear programme.

Addressing at "Meet the press" programme arranged by the Rawalpindi Press Club here, he pointed out than American officials and expects have long been working on a US strategy to dismantle Pakistan's nuclear programme. He observed that the policy of non-intrusive verification of Parliament's nuclear programme is currently underway through the seismic station at Chakwal.

He substantiated his allegation by saying that the United States government has sought funding for the Chakwal facility from the American Congress on the grounds that the facility will help promote the US regional proliferation agenda."

Mushahid Hussain referred to the statement of the US Deputy Secretary of State Strobe Talbott made at the end of his visit to Pakistan in which he said he fully satisfied with the results of the mission to Pakistan since he has accomplished all the objectives that he set out to accomplish.

He further said Foreign Minister Sardar Asif Ahmad Ali, announced at a press conference on April 11, 1991 that the PPP regime is considering the American proposal for non-intrusive verification of Pakistan's nuclear programme. He pointed out that the visiting US Energy Secretary, Hazel O'Leary said in Islamabad that "in a subtle way, may be so subtle that you will not and cannot see it, Pakistan, India and North Korea will apt for nuclear non- proliferation in lieu of economic gains offered by countries like the United States." Was this a reference to Chakwal facility by the American Energy Secretary, he posed a question.

The PML leader said the US Assistant Secretary of State for South Asia, Robin Raphel, doing her visit to Bombay in October last defined Pakistan's nuclear programme as a "short-term reality", obviously implying that US efforts to dismantle Pakistan's nuclear capability will succeed.

He claimed that it's only after the visit of Defence Secretary, William Perry and after his confirmation of Pakistan's acceptance regarding the Chakwal facility to monitor the nuclear programme that the United States government announces Benazir Bhutto's official visit to Washington to see President Clinton at White House on April 11, 1995.

West 'Interfered' in Death Row Blasphemy Case

BK0103154295 Karachi NAWA-I-WAQT in Urdu 25 Feb 95 p 6

[Editorial: "The Blasphemy Case—External Pressure and Interference"]

[FBIS Translated Text] A division bench of the Lahore High Court has acquitted two people who were on death row in a blasphemy case. The honorable judges declared: "God and his apostle will be pleased to see that we succeeded in giving the verdict according to our conscience. God will reward us!" The honorable judges will hear God's judgment when they appear before Him, but it is generally felt that the manner in which the United States and the West pressured the government and the hasty manner in which the proceedings were conducted and the verdict given under that pressure are a challenge to the independence and sovereignty of Pakistan. Qazi Hussain Ahmad, chief of the Jamaat-i-Islami, has said that the global powers spared no effort in influencing the court's verdict. They used diplomatic circles, media, and the so-called human rights organizations to influence the decision. The Jamiat-i-Ulema-i-Islam party has alleged that the court's judgment was dictated by the government and the United States. The Punjab wing of the Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz Group said that the government has hurt the feelings of Muslims by bowing to Zionist pressure. The counsel for the defendants claimed that the U.S. Government is pleased with the judgment. Maulana Samiul Haq reacted by saying that the government, by articulating this judgment, invited God's punishment on the 120 million people of Pakistan.

Without going into the judicial merit of this particular case, it may be presumed that the judges are responsible for giving the verdict that they did, but the manner in which the United States and the West directly interfered and the manner in which the U.S. and the Western media took interest in this case clearly expose their designs. The BBC deliberately continued to use the phrase contempt of religion rather than blasphemy against the holy prophet. While commenting on the judgment, the BBC correspondent—a Muslim—based in Lahore chose to refer to the apostle of Islam simply as the "respected prophet" and failed to use words befitting the exalted position of the holy prophet.

The general view was that the government wanted to have the case decided before the prime minister's visit to the United States, so she would not have to face any embarrassment after her arrival in Washington. The reason for this may be that our rulers, under the influence of the United States and the West, try to present themselves as liberals. The anti-Islamic propaganda campaign launched by the United States and the West against what they call fundamentalism and militancy beggars no description and is no secret. Ironically, the same United States and the West—who claim to be the champions of democracy—could not swallow the election victory of the "Islamists" in Algeria. Previously, when a Muslim fought the Soviets in Afghanistan, he was considered a "holy warrior" by the United States, but now when a Kashmiri Muslim is sacrificing his life to achieve freedom, he is branded a "terrorist". In fact, the United States and the West are proving to be great fundamentalists and terrorists. Muslim girls in a country like France are not allowed to wear scarves.

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The sole reason why the U.S. and Western governments, institutions, and media became interested in the blasphemy case was that the accused were Christians. In fact, the West's attempt to ensure domination of the new world order over the Muslims represents the beginning of a new era of the Crusades. Our government should have made it known to the people that it was not facing any external pressure in connection with the blasphemy case. Pakistan is an independent, sovereign, Muslim, state. The next century is about to begin and we must not accept the domination of any colonial power. Any government that tries to force the yoke of the new world order around the necks of the Pakistani Muslims will not last long. In the wake of this blasphemy case, it can be alleged that the rights of the minorities are not safe in Pakistan. In fact, India has been in the forefront of this propaganda, but in view of the miserable condition of the minorities in that country and the reign of terror loosed against the Kashmiri Muslims, it does not behoove New Delhi to indulge in such chicanery.

Iranian Ambassador Discusses Economic Cooperation

LD0203101795 Tehran IRNA in English 0906 GMT 2 Mar 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Islamabad, March 2, IRNA—The Iranian Ambassador to Pakistan, Mohammad Mehdi Akhondzadeh, called on Pakistani businessmen to coordinate with their Iranian counterparts in expanding economic and commercial cooperation between the two countries.

Addressing a group of Pakistani traders and businessmen who had taken part in an iftar (breaking fast) ceremony, arranged by the Iranian Embassay here Wednesday [1 March] night, he said that such efforts should be made within the framework of policies set by the Economic Cooperation Organization (ECO), adding that they should aim at forming a regional commercial and industrial pole in Asia and throughout the world.

He referred to Iran-Pakistan gas pipeline project, establishment of joint border markets, setting up of exclusive exhibitions in each countries and long term commerical cooperation as outstanding instances of cooperation between the two countries.

He described the coming ECO summit as a significant development in regional cooperation and noted that setting up of air links and shipping lines as well as activities in such fields as insurance and banking showed the organization's success in boosting cooperation among its members.

The ECO summit is to be held in Islamabad March 14-15.

Delegation Asks UN To End Kashmir 'Agression'

BK0103053795 Islamabad Radio Pakistan Network in English 0300 GMT 1 Mar 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Pakistan has called upon UN Human Rights Commission in Geneva to force India to end its aggression in occupied Kashmir. The leader of the Pakistan delegation to the coming session of the commission, Mr. Sharifuddin Pirzada, made this call in a statement yesterday. He said India must withdraw its forces from occupied Kashmir and repeal the repressive laws enforced in the territory to crush the liberation struggle of the Kashmiri people. He said India must release all Kashmiri prisoners and provide access to the human rights organizations to the territory freely in order to help them ascertain the facts there.

Mr. Pirzada rebutted Indian propaganda of elections and said it was designed to deflect international pressure regarding its ongoing repression in occupied Kashmir. He debunked Indian allegations of terrorism against Pakistan and said the struggle of the Kashmiri people is totally indigenous. He said India's claim to be a secular state has been belied by its refusal to give Kashmiri people their right of self-determination. Mr. Pirzada told the commission that not only in occupied Kashmir but elsewhere in India there was a sharp rise of Hindu fundamentalism which was demonstrated by Hindu fanatics in the destruction of the historic Babri mosque, and recurrence of communal riots, as well as several programs against Indian Muslims. The leader of the Pakistan delegation urged the commission to respond to the legitimate demands of the people of Kashmir which have been presented to it in the form of a memorandum. He said the human rights crisis in occupied Kashmir must be overcome without further delay.

Editorial Views 'Secret Talks' With India

BK0103104695 Islamabad THE NATION in English 1 Mar 95 p 6

[Editorial: "Unofficial Nuclear Talks"]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Nuclear experts from Pakistan and India are reported to have initiated a dialogue on the question of arms limitation in the region. According to a Press report, 'secret talks' were held between the two sides in the Indian coastal state of Goa last month, and the 'unofficial conference' was also attended by the US and Chinese defence experts. However, this was not for the first time that such a meeting had taken place, the representatives of the four countries had also met earlier in Shanghai in February last year. Significant progress was said to have been made at the talks which, for understandable reasons, are being conducted discreetly and without being termed as 'official', and the next round is likely to be held in Islamabad. For Pakistan, which has been singled out for browbeating on the nuclear issue,sf it should be a matter of some satisfaction that India has come round to participating in 'regional talks' on the matter. While Pakistan has all along been taking the position that nuclear non-proliferation should be treated as a regional issue, the Indians have stubbornly refused to accept a package deal that equates India's nuclear programme with that of Pakistan. Thus, Pakistan's proposal for a five-nation conference to settle

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the rules of the game for a nuclear-free South Asia has been rejected by New Delhi, even though it has been favourable responded to in international quarters. India's 'imperial urge', has, hitherto, deterred its policy planners from agreeing to a regional solution to the arms race in South Asia, and New Delhi has made no bones about its aspiration to emulate the 'great power' model in acquiring conventional weapons as well as recourse to the nuclear option. And whenever Pakistan has taken the plea that it would be willing to sign the NPT [Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty], provided India does it at the same time, New Delhi has insisted that nuclear disarmament is a 'global issue' and hence cannot be settled at the regional level.

India's willingness to sit at regional talks, which an Indian defence analyst acknowledged signifies a policy shift, albeit a subtle one, may not lead to a dramatic breakthrough in the elusive quest for peace and security in the region, but it does make a beginning in the right direction. Nevertheless, New Delhi will have to descend quite a bit from its self-designated role of big brother to move towards an equitable accord for arms control in the region, apart from comprehending the imperative of meaningful negotiations on the core issue of discord between Pakistan and India. So long as the Kashmir issue remains unresolved and the Indian war machine is being used to subjugate the people of Kashmir, no arms control accord would be good enough to allay fears of aggression and hegemony in the region and ensure a durable peace between Pakistan and India.

Traders Vow Action If Karachi Peace Not Restored

BK0103141595 Islamabad THE MUSLIM in English 1 Mar 95 p 13

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Karachi, Feb 28—Traders and industrialists of Karachi have threatened to stop releasing advertisements to Pakistan Television if law and order situation was not improved and peace was not restored in the metropolis by March 31.

S M Muneer, president of Federation of Pakistan Chambers of Commerce and Industry, urged the government to hold local bodies elections soon, he was addressing a press conference here. He said 'Id would be celebrated with simplicity and there would be no 'Id parties this year.

S M Muneer condemned the incompetency of the government and said nobody was bothered by the killings and massacres in such a large scale.

He said a meeting of traders and industrialists would be called after 'Id to review the whole situation. He said "we would be constrained to stop payment of taxes of the government, "if the condition did not improve."

Meanwhile the Karachi Cotton Association has condemned the brutal killings of innocent persons in incidents of firing and attacks on mosques and Imambargahs [Shi'ite shrines] and expressed profound sorrow and grief over the loss of valuable life. It also demanded arrest of terrorists and award of exemplary punishment to them.

In a press release, the association expressed serious concern over the deteriorating law and order situation which is causing deep anxiety to the members of the cotton trade. The increasing number of incidents of killings, dacoitites, robberies, car snatching etc has created a sense of great anxiety, insecurity, and concern in the business community and also affected the business activities.

It further said it was the basic and foremost responsibility of the government to maintain law and order restore peace in this most important commercial and industrial city of Pakistan otherwise, it might cause serious repercussions on the economy and the efforts being made by the government to promote massive investment, industrialisation, employment and social uplift may receive a great set back.

The association urged the government to take all possible steps to maintain law and order and restore peace in Karachi.

Sri Lanka

'Active Interference' Economic Policy Expected

BK2802135695 Colombo Sri Lanka Broadcasting Corporation International Service in English 1045 GMT 28 Feb 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] The government's policy is to impose tax on those who can afford it, to protect local industry, and attract investment. While adhering to a coherent fiscal and tax policy, the government has to continue its welfare and subsidy programs to contain inflation and help the majority low income groups.

Minister of justice, constitutional affairs and deputy minister of finance, Professor G.L. Peiris, made these observations when he delivered the keynote address at the one-day seminar on fiscal policy and the taxpayers at the Colombo Renaissance Hotel this morning. The seminar has been organized by the Sri Lanka Institute of Taxation.

Speaking on the fiscal policy's perspectives in the development strategy of Sri Lanka, Professor Peiris said that the government expects to follow a policy of active interference in the economy. The entire Sri Lankan society will be placed in jeopardy if the government did not do so.

President Dismisses LTTE Claims on Stalled Talks

BK0103100295 Hong Kong AFP in English 0806 GMT 1 Mar 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] COLOMBO, March 1 (AFP)—Sri Lanka President Chandrika Kumaratunga rejected

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Tamil guerrilla claims Wednesday [1 March] that her government was responsible for the deadlock in their talks intended to end ethnic bloodletting.

Kumaratunga said the war of words launched by the rebel Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) Tuesday was probably a response to mounting public pressure against the guerrillas.

"I think the LTTE is getting worried about public opinion which may be a good thing in the long run," Kumaratunga said, responding to a letter from LTTE leader Velupillai Prabhakaran accusing her government of deception.

"A lot of it is false. We will give a detailed response in about two days," Kumaratunga said, adding she did not expect the harsh exchanges would be a setback to the peace process she initiated after coming to power in August.

Kumaratunga maintains that it is the Tigers who are reluctant to discuss a political package. The US government and the European Union recently urged both parties to begin political negotiations.

The conflict has claimed over 30,000 lives since 1972.

Prabhakaran's letter expressed disappointment over what he called the lack of government attention to the needs of Tamil civilians living in LTTE-controlled regions of the north.

Kumaratunga accused the LTTE of grabbing most of the supplies sent to the northern Jaffna peninsula for the use of civilians. "We know the LTTE takes most of the supplies and that is why prices are high," she said.

Kumaratunga partially lifted an economic embargo on Jaffna in a bid to boost the peace process but the Tigers said that it was not enough. Dates for the fourth round of talks are yet to be finalised.

"The talk about lifting the embargo is another piece of deception," the Tiger leader said. He also warned that the peace process would be in danger if the government did not agree to a permanent ceasefire.

A truce which went into effect on January 8 is holding, despite minor violations, but four monitoring committees headed by foreigners have not begun work because of differences between the Tigers and Colombo.

"The problems is that both sides seem to be taking up legal positions which is no@ a good thing for all," said a government official involved in the peace process.

Prabhakaran charged that actions of chief government negotiator Kusumsiri Balapatabendi were working against the peace process.

Balapatabendi announced the opening of safe passage to LTTE-held northern Jaffna peninsula last week but was accused of doing so without conceeding LTTE demands to lift an economic embargo on Jaffna and dismantle a nearby army camp.

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